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FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

An Illustrated Journal of Amusement, Adventure, and Instruction.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

A NEW FEATURE—THREE WEEKLY PRIZES FOR THE BEST DRAWINGS.

WE gave, in a recent number, an outline Drawing Lesson. Some of our readers may have wondered why it was put in. We now give our explanation.

There is no accomplishment which can afford greater pleasure to the young, or become more profitable afterward, than skill in drawing.

The daguerreotype and the photograph give us many pictures, but the artist's hand is required even with them, and there are thousands of cases where the pencil alone can supply what is required.

Drawing is taught in most of our schools, but many pay no attention to it, deeming it of little use. To encourage those who have acquired some proficiency, and to stimulate others to take up the study in earnest and cultivate the talent they possess, we propose to give, for a time, THREE WEEKLY PRIZES FOR THE BEST DRAWING sent in to FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

The drawing is to be sent accompanied by an attestation of the young person's teacher that it is actually the pupil's own work, without outlining or touching up by any other hand.

The first prize, THREE DOLLARS, will be given for the best drawing of the human figure, or the head, torso, arm, hand, foot, etc.

The second prize, TWO DOLLARS, for the best drawing of an animal, the whole figure, or the head.

The third prize, ONE DOLLAR, for the best landscape.

Drawings that, in the opinion of the Committee of Judges, possess remarkable merit—and we hope to receive one such each week—will be engraved for FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY, and the name of the artist given.

In order to give time for the first competition, as this feature is introduced for the first time, the prizes will be awarded on the seventeenth of November, and after that every week. The successful candidates will be made known in No. 685, which will appear on the 24th of November, and be paid that week, the same as our Round Table prizes.

It is recommended that the sketches be not too large—not to exceed eight inches by ten. They should be sent flat, in an envelope, and not on rollers, which are liable to delay and accident in the mail.

The Young Hero of Cape Ann;

Or,

The Fishing Trip of an American Boy.

By ROGER STARBUCK.

CHAPTER XVII.

HAVING recaptured the schooner, George set his watches, after which he held a consultation with Old Tom and Coleman as to their future course. He described what he had learned from Brunt regarding the crew of the *Falcon*.

"I think our best plan, then, is to head for Gloucester," said Coleman. "It is likely Mr. Palmer and his men have all been lost aboard that old Norway craft; otherwise we should have heard of them before now."

"I am afraid it is so," said Bertha, who, with Jenny, had listened to the conference. "I have little hope now of ever seeing father again."

"We will head along to the north," said George. "The name of the Norway craft was the *Bergen*, and it is likely she belonged to the port of that name. We will go there and make inquiries."

Accordingly, the schooner was headed to the north and east. Coleman and Old Tom thought it was a mere loss of time, and said so.

"No," replied George. "I shall not give up looking for that lost crew until I learn something definite about them."

"I think it useless, my boy," said Old Tom; "but if you wish it, darn me if I'm the man to go against it."

For about a week the schooner was kept on her course, favored by fair winds.

The fog still lay on the water; it had not cleared since the hour the vessel was boarded by the cutter and the coast gang.

Now, however, there was a change of wind, and the mist began to roll away in clouds.

George, as soon as the fog was gone, ran aloft, spyglass in hand, and took a good survey of the broad expanse of water.

He saw a sail far away astern, and pointing his glass toward it, he made it out to be the English sloop-of-war.

"Ay, ay," said Old Tom, when George came down with this information; "I thought we wouldn't shake that fellow off so easily. He's now probably in chase of us, and there's some more infernal hindrances in store for us."

"I am making you a great deal of trouble," said Bertha, anxiously, to the young captain. "But for your search for my father and his crew, this would not have happened."

"I expect trouble," said George. "But nothing short of the destruction of my craft shall prevent my continuing the search. As to that Englishman, I don't think he'll overtake us in a hurry. We are going to have a heavy gale, and I am in hopes that will separate us!"

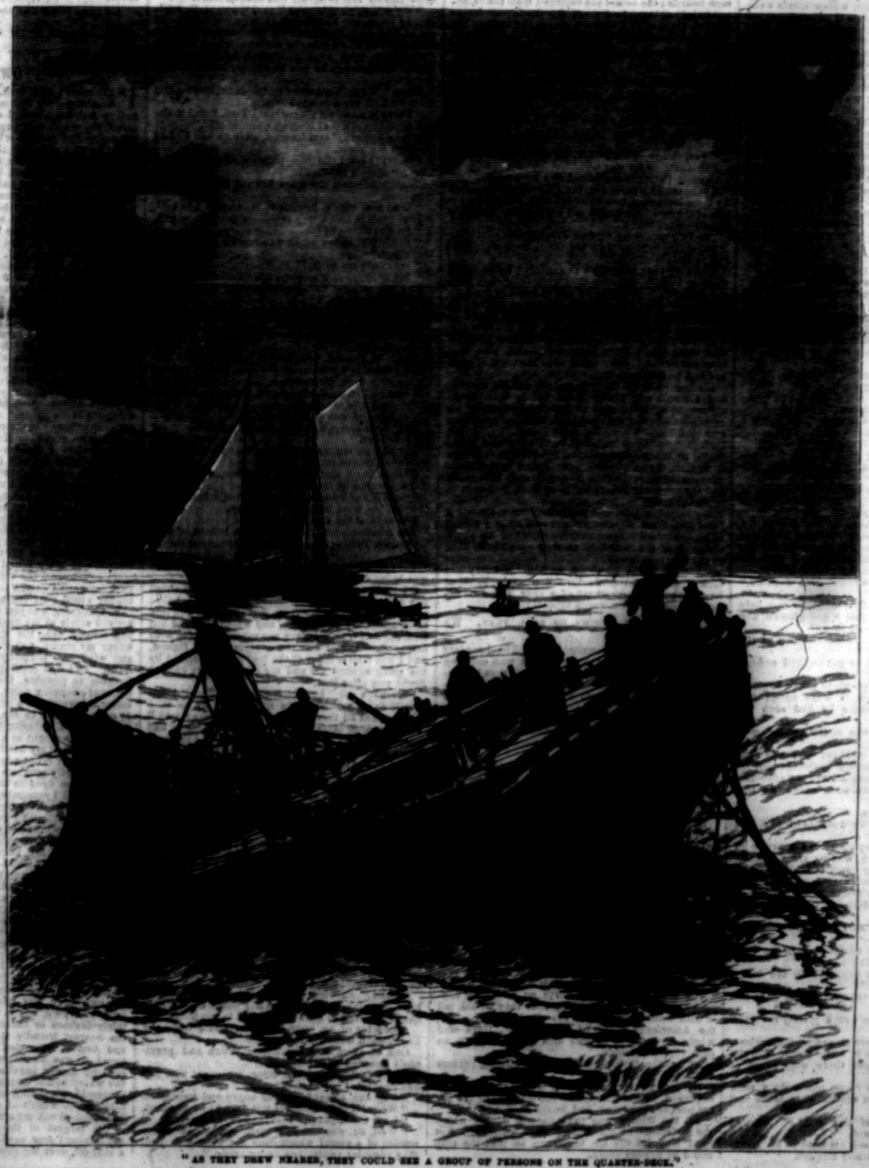
"Ay, here it comes, a perfect peeler!" said Old Tom, pointing to the scud, the rack, and a line of white water astern. "That Englishman will keep away from us now, if he knows what is best for him. A vessel of his draught should give the coast yonder a wide berth."

And as he spoke Tom looked toward the faint, blue line of the Irish coast to the leeward.

"Will there not be danger of our being driven ashore?" inquired Bertha.

"No!" said George. "This wind will soon haul around more to the south and west, if I am not mistaken."

The distant roar of



"AS THEY DREW NEARER, THEY COULD SEE A GROUP OF PERSONS ON THE QUARTER-DECK."

the approaching storm could now be heard. In less than half an hour later it burst upon the schooner—a perfect tornado.

George, however, was prepared for it.

He had taken in both his topsail and mainsail, and was ready to send before it.

For nearly an hour the little schooner, nearly on her beam-ends, was driven before the howling, shrieking blast, directly toward the coast.

Then, as the young captain had predicted, the wind changed round to the south and west, the gale seeming to increase in violence.

The vessel, from hull to truck, was shrouded in clouds of flying spray, so thick that no man could see more than twenty yards ahead of him.

On went the schooner, rolling and plunging, at times half buried in the foaming, rushing waters.

All day the gale raged with unabated violence, and at times it seemed as if the masts would be blown out of her deck.

At last it abated somewhat, although it still blew hard, and there was a heavy sea.

When George went below that night he ordered Coleman to keep a good lookout, and to call him in a few hours if the gale did not abate still more.

He had not been long asleep when he was awakened by the rush of footsteps over his head, and the voice of Coleman issuing quick orders to the man at the wheel.

He sprang from his berth, hastily dressed himself, and ran on deck.

The gale was still blowing with great fury, and the gloom was intense, save here and there where the darkness was slightly relieved by the patches of sparkling foam upon the waves.

The schooner, plunging and rolling madly, was rushing along before the howling blast, with the seas occasionally breaking over her rail and sweeping her deck fore and aft.

George quickly perceived the cause of the tumult which had aroused him.

Directly ahead of the vessel, not more than three ships' lengths off, he beheld the outline of an object swaying and plunging wildly, with its lanterns shedding a lurid gleam through the darkness.

By this light the young captain could perceive that it was the wreck of a ship, whose masts were all gone, leaving only the stumps remaining.

As well as the youth could make out in the faint light, the bulwarks of the wreck were badly shattered, and her jibboom was in splinters.

The seas were sweeping over her, and ere George could make further observations, one of these overwhelming masses of water broke and extinguished the lanterns, so that nothing was now visible except the indistinct line of her hull.

"We will run her down! I'm afraid," said Coleman to the captain. "As we have no sail on, the schooner is slow in answering her helm."

In fact, a collision seemed scarcely avoidable. George darted forward, trumpet in hand, and peering through the gloom, issued his orders.

"Steady! steady as you go!" he shouted to the helmsman.

"Steady it is!" was the reply.

"We are heading straight for the wreck," said Coleman to George, in dismay. "We don't fall off a hair's breadth."

"Ay, ay."

"Had we not better try a luff, sir?"

"No. Let her keep as she is."

"But we will be aloul of the wreck if we do."

"Wait, and you will see," answered George.

For a few moments the schooner dashed steadily on her way toward the wreck. As she neared it, shrieks and cries from those aboard could be heard, and their forms could be dimly seen as they ran to and fro.

"We had better luff," repeated Coleman.

"No," persisted the young captain.

As he spoke he pointed to a sea which was rushing down upon the schooner's weather-bow.

The sea struck her when she was within a ship's length of the wreck, and had the effect of knocking her off.

Away she went, whizzing past the stranger, almost grazing one of her shattered boats with her main boom.

As she rushed on, George applied his trumpet to his mouth.

"Are you sinking?" he cried.

There was a response, but, in the din of the storm, the young captain could not hear what was said, and before he could repeat the question the schooner was out of speaking distance, and the wreck was almost invisible in the gloom astern.

"I am afraid these poor wretches are doomed," said Coleman.

"I hope they will keep afloat until we can help them," said George. "The gale is going down, and we may be able to lie to before long."

In fact, about an hour later, the violence of the gale abated.

George was then enabled to get out sail enough to enable him to lie to.

It was, however, still too rough to lower boats.

At length the young captain wore round and headed in the direction where he had seen the stranger.

At daybreak the latter was again sighted, now about half a mile to leeward.

The forward part of the disabled hull was submerged, and the after portion projected out of water in such a way that those aboard the schooner knew that the wreck must soon make its last plunge.

George lowered two boats.

He placed himself in the sternsheets of one, and Old Tom took charge of the other.

As they drew nearer, they could see a group of persons on the quarter-deck, waving their arms as a signal for the approaching party to make haste.

The schooner's men pulled with a will, and they were soon close upon the stranger.

"Tom," cried George, excitedly, "do you notice the color of that hull?"

"Tarnation! yes; it's a sort of yellowish white, streaked with rust."

"Ay, ay, and if I'm not mistaken it is the very craft we are looking for—the *Bergen*!"

"Don't be too sure, my boy. There are many vessels of that same color."

"Yes, but I have every reason to think it is the one I speak of.

A still nearer view of the wreck plainly revealed its miserable condition.

The rails fore and aft were stoven in, the timbers were scraped and broken in many places, and the bow was patched here and there with strips of tarred canvas.

The moment the boats came alongside a rope was thrown, and the light vessels were made fast to the chains.

"What's the name of this craft?" inquired George, as he sprang aboard.

The man he spoke to shook his head as an intimation that he did not understand English.

At the same time, however, another person came up to George.

He was an elderly, fine-looking man.

"The name of this vessel is the *Bergen*," he said. "Thank God, young man, you have come just in time to save us all."

George looked earnestly at the speaker. Something in the expression of his eyes reminded him of Bertha.

"You are Captain Palmer?" he said.

The man stared and looked surprised.

"You know my name?" he cried. "I am sure I have never seen you before."

"Ay, ay, now," broke in old Tom, "this is surely a most delightful turn of affairs! But come, there ain't any time to lose, as the wreck will go down in less than a minute. To the boats! to the boats, every one!"

About thirty men in all had now collected amidships.

George, glancing at them, could easily distinguish the Americans—Captain Palmer's men—from the Norwegians.

"Ay, ay, into the boats all of you," he cried. "As my friend Tom says, we have no time to spare."

All were soon in the boats, and the latter were now pulled from the wreck.

Scarcely were they ten fathoms from it when, with a sheer to starboard, the old hull buried its bows in the sea and plunged out of sight for ever.

The Norwegian captain and sailors gazed sadly upon the spot where the wreck had gone down.

George then grasped Captain Palmer's hand.

"I have found you at last," he said; "and all your men with you!"

"All but two," said the captain.

"The two who were killed by the coast-gang?"

"Yes. But how came you to know this?"

"It is a long story," said George; "wait until we get aboard the craft, and then I have a 'surprise' in store for you, and then we will both make our explanations."

As the schooner was heading to meet the boats the latter were soon alongside.

Bertha had not yet come on deck, but just as the men boarded the vessel she emerged from the cabin.

At sight of Captain Palmer she stood still for an instant, then, with a wild cry of joy, she sprang forward and was folded to his breast!

CHAPTER XVIII.

EXPLANATIONS.

THE old captain strained his child to his bosom, and held her as if fearful that, were he to let go of her, she would vanish from his sight.

"Bertha, my daughter, my own child!" he cried, in accents of joy.

"Yes, father—dear father, we meet at last!"

Explanations followed.

Captain Palmer's statement was soon made.

At the time his schooner, the *Falcon*, was boarded by the coast-gang, he and all his men, except two—one of the foremast hands and his nephew, Bertha's cousin—were below.

The two men were thrown overboard.

Then the hatches and the cabin door were fastened over the others.

Knowing that his craft was captured by outlaws, Captain Palmer, thinking they were smugglers from the coast, expected that he and the rest of his men would be served in the same manner as the two on deck, whose despairing cries had been heard as they were being hurled, half dead, into the sea.

By the noise of the footsteps above him he knew that there was a large party there, and, also, that they were armed, as he could hear the click of musket and pistol-locks.

Having no arms himself, except one old musket and a pistol, and his crew numbering but twelve sailors, he could indulge no hope of beating off his assailants when they should rush down upon him and his men.

Expecting, therefore, that both crew and vessel would be made away with, he resolved to endeavor to explain the anticipated occurrence, so that those who should marvel at the disappearance of himself and the schooner might have, at least, a chance to learn the truth.

He seized a pen, and was about to write out a brief statement, which he might seal up in a bottle, to be afterward thrown overboard, when he heard the noise of the boarders as they opened the door of the companionway.

He rushed into the hold, and in his hurry and lack of proper materials for the purpose in view, he seized an old fragment of a spar, and with his pen traced out these words upon it:

"WE ARE THE VICTIMS OF FOUL PLAY. WE HAVE—"

He had no time to write more. The boarders came rushing into the hold, but it was only by dodging behind casks and coils of rope that he succeeded in getting back to the cabin, and in throwing the fragment of spar overboard through the cabin-window.

Scarcely had he done so when he was seized by a party of the gang, and bound hand and foot.

He and his men, thus bound, were set adrift in one of the boats.

A terrible storm came up that night, and the boat was nearly swamped.

This, in fact, would have taken place had not the boat drifted alongside of a Norwegian vessel, the *Bergen*, which was then lying to in the gale.

By this fortunate accident the occupants of the boat were all saved.

The Norwegians made the boat fast to the chains and severed the cords with which the arms and feet of the schooner's crew were bound, thus enabling them to get aboard.

The captain of the *Bergen* treated them kindly.

He understood a little English, and Captain Palmer told him his story, and requested him, when the storm was over, to land him somewhere on the Irish coast.

But the Norwegian said he was afraid to do this—that he feared now to go near the coast, lest the same outlaws who had taken Captain Palmer's vessel should attempt to capture his own.

The craft was heading north on a whaling voyage, he said, and it was likely that they would fall in with some home-bound vessel, aboard of which the Americans could be transferred. Days and weeks passed, but no such vessel was seen.

At last the *Bergen* arrived in the whaling regions and cruised for whales.

Her captain ventured too far north, and as a consequence, he was caught in the ice toward the latter part of the season, and frozen in.

All the Winter was thus passed, during which the sufferings of the sailors were extreme. Not until May did the ice break up so that the ship could be headed south.

She had been badly injured, her bows stoven, her rail damaged, and her sails worn nearly threadbare.

These were patched, and the captain proceeded on his way, now heading for the coast of Norway.

Adverse winds were encountered, and the rudder having been damaged, he was driven again and again off his course.

Thus weeks and months passed.

At last the rudder became so badly broken that the ship could scarcely be steered at all.

Observations now revealed the fact that the vessel was somewhere off the north coast of Ireland.

Then the late storm came up, the worn masts went by the board, and the ship, which leaked badly, was at the mercy of the winds and waves.

"In every boat was stoven," continued Captain Palmer, "for we must still have found a grave in the sea but for your timely arrival to our rescue."

"Ay, ay," said George. "But I trust your troubles are now at an end."

The other thanked the youth warmly for the exertions he had made to find him, and which had at last been crowned with success.

"It would be impossible for me to ever repay you sufficiently for what you have done," he said.

Involuntarily George glanced at Bertha. Guessing his thoughts, her cheeks were dyed with blushes.

"Fact is," said Old Tom, mischievously, "I own there's one way in which you might repay this young man for what he has done for you. To my thinking, I guess it's about the only reward he'd take from you, and I can tell you it's one of the kind of rewards which he would jump at like a shark at a flying fish; you can just make up your mind on that p'int."

"Tell me what it is," said Captain Palmer, eagerly.

Your darter, with her bright eyes and rosy cheeks! Darn me if I think George would refuse such bait as that," added Tom, laughing.

Palmer looked at the young people.

The sparkling, wistful eyes of the youth and the blushing cheeks and downcast eyes of the girl, as she now laid her face against her father's breast and wound both arms about his neck, indicated quite plainly that Old Tom had spoken truly.

"We will think this over," said the captain, smiling, as he shook hands with George. "I have no doubt that we will agree."

Bertha ran down into the cabin, to which Captain Palmer was soon after conducted by George and shown the quarters he was to occupy while aboard the craft.

When the youth returned to the deck, he saw Old Tom with his glass pointed astern.

"There is a sail off there," said Tom, "and if I'm not mistaken it's that English sloop-of-war."

"True enough," said George, after he had looked through the glass.

"Sail O!" cried Old Tom, pointing off the weather-bow; "there's another!"

George directed the glass toward it and took a long look.

"We are nicely hemmed in now," he said. "That craft is also a war vessel—a sloop-of-war!"

"An Englishman?"

"Probably, as few other war-vessels cruise about this coast."

"What are we to do?"

"We must try to give them the slip," said George. "The fog is now to leeward. Once in that, we might escape them."

The schooner was headed for the fog-bank, which was a long distance off.

Meanwhile, the sloop-of-war astern had crowded all sail in chase.

"She is gaining fast," said Tom. "Darn her eyes, I shouldn't wonder if she has picked up the cutter with that lieutenant in it; and perhaps she has also picked up those rascals whom we took out of the hold and set adrift!"

The sloop-of-war kept gaining.

The other sloop was also now bearing down for the schooner.

The one astern was soon less than half a league from the fugitive craft.

George kept steadily on, however, and was at last concealed by the strip of fog.

Scarcely had he entered it, however, when, to his dismay, the wind began to die away.

The sails of the schooner shook.

Ten minutes later there was not a breath of air.

Captain Palmer and his daughter now came on deck.

They had learned from Coleman that the schooner was being chased.

"Do not worry," said Palmer to George, "about any delay or trouble. If those Englishmen board us, I think I can satisfy them that they were told them about the coast gang, and which they did not believe, was true. I have my vessel's papers with me to show that I was the captain of the *Falcon*, and I will inform them of the foul play practiced by the gang against me and my crew. They cannot doubt you after that."

"Perhaps not," here interposed Old Tom. "But they'll delay us and make trouble for us, as they will say that all these things must be looked into."

Half an hour later the fog cleared. George had run up the Stars and Stripes at his gaff, and the war-vessel astern refrained from throwing any shot.

Two boats, however, were seen making toward her from that vessel, now not more than half a league distant.

Old Tom pointed toward the other war-craft.

"She is not more than two miles off," he remarked. "Shouldn't wonder if we have a visit from her, also."

Captain Palmer looked intently at this vessel.

"I do not think she is an Englishman," he said.

Even as he spoke the craft astern hoisted her colors, and the other ship returned the compliment.

"The American flag!" cried George. "She is an American!"

At these words the crew of the schooner gave three rousing cheers.

As for Old Tom, he almost danced for joy.

"Ay, ay," he cried; "we are certainly all right now."

"Two of her boats are coming this way!" said Bertha, clapping her hands.

"Good!" shouted Tom. "Ho, ho! Now we'll have fair play, and bless me if I don't think Uncle Sam's cruiser will soon put an end to our troubles."

A quarter of an hour later the boats from the Englishman were alongside.

One of them was the cutter which had previously boarded the schooner.

George recognized the same lieutenant who had had charge of her at that time.

He sprang aboard, looking angry and impatient.

"Where is the captain of this craft?" he inquired.

"I am the captain," said George, advancing.

"Well, sir, you and your men, who have got possession of a vessel which does not belong to you, may consider yourselves under arrest."

"No, sir!" replied George. "This vessel belongs to me!"

"The others tell a different story."

"What others?"

"The persons whom you set adrift. I came across them, and took them with me to the sloop-of-war, which we were fortunate enough to meet in the bay. You have caused us much trouble, first and last."

"Those people you speak of have persecuted us ever since we sailed," said George. "I repeat, as I said before, that this is my own craft, and that they have tried again and again to capture her from me."

"There will have to be an inquiry made into the matter," said the lieutenant. "For the present you will have to consider yourselves under arrest."

"No, darn me if we will!" cried Old Tom. "It's a pretty idea, I swan, if honest American fishermen are to be arrested by Englishmen!"

"*Honest* fishermen we have no desire to molest," said the lieutenant. "But you were in league with the Irish smugglers, as is proved by your taking away from us, under cover of night, that craft which you call the *Falcon*."

"We had a right to do so," said George. "That craft belonged to this young lady's father," he added, indicating Bertha. "As to our being with the smugglers, it was mere accident. They captured us, and we escaped from them."

In a few words the young captain told the whole story.

"That vessel, the *Falcon*, belongs to me!" said Captain Palmer, now stepping forward. "I, too, have a story to tell about those rascals who claim this schooner."

And he proceeded to give an account of the capture of his vessel by the colony men.

The lieutenant listened with a puzzled air.

Then Captain Palmer pulled his papers from his pocket and showed them to the officer.

"These are certainly correct," he said. "Nevertheless, there must be a court of inquiry."

"We all object to the delay," said Palmer.

"We are anxious to proceed on our voyage."

"I cannot help that. My orders must be executed."

[To be continued.]

"The Young Hero of Cape Ann" was commenced in No. 676.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT HOOTING OWLS.

IN the month of March, when the ducks in large numbers were making their Spring visit to us before moving North, I one Sunday morning captured the old family dugout and started out to reconnoitre the ground where my game fed, that I might be on hand early the next morning and take satisfaction out of the first bunch I saw for the ducking I had enjoyed in their company the previous Fall. The wind had blown with such force as to prostrate a great many of the largest oak-trees which grew on the soft bottom-lands along the Passaic River, making the brushy tops of these tallest pin-oaks a capital place to which the floating seeds of the smart-weed, wild rice, and a good many of the acorns which had, until then, clung to the branches of the wind-felled trees. I selected a large tree, and set to work to make openings or portholes through the roots, for as they blew over, the earth had hung fast to them, so that they made a first-class fort. Everything was in readiness.

My next move was to be up before dawn the following morning and successfully paddle the dugout to the contest. I had both studied and practiced the art of navigation at an early age—this being learned in an old washtub in our cellar when hunting for apples and potatoes, for ours was one of the old-fashioned kind, always flooded upon the slightest provocations. Our highest ambition was to get a dugout of the lightest character and of the smallest proportions. In one I had we had succeeded—a boat so crank, so frolicsome of bottom, that a tobacco-chewer must needs be extremely careful how he shifted his quid if he didn't wish to go rolling for it. As, however, I did not indulge in the habits, I was exempt from such extra precaution.

When I retired the night before, my mind was too much occupied to admit of much sleep, so the time was passed in frequent consultations of the time-piece, for I felt it was necessary to be in my lair before the very first streak of daylight appeared. This a particular desire proved none of the darkest, of course, and after I had started, demanded all the more caution, all the vigilance I possessed to navigate my craft through the brush, stumps and fallen timber which ever and again obstructed the way.

The morning was just right for my purpose, and I arrived safely at my destination, the skin of my head formed over the water, but I got round and under my stump, and was then sheltered from rain and wind, and perfectly hidden from the sharpest sight. As I was settling myself to await, as comfortably as possible, the coming dawn, I heard a peculiar snapping noise, like the breaking of a twig under the weight of a heavy foot. I looked upward at once, but only to see, about ten feet above me, a brace of bald-shining like fire, as round as moons, but twice as bright as a Winter's one.

Every hair of my head crept upward, while a chill for every hair crept adown my back-bone. Brought up in a strictly religious family, visions of Satan uprose in those eyes as they pierced me through and through, and I remembered it was the Sabbath; or, I thought, as I sat there shivering, with the cold rain trampling on earth, had gotten belated in fishing on some devil's work, and so stopped over! These and many other reflections quite as wild passed through my mind, and my humility on that occasion was fully equal to my frigid. Recovering myself with an effort, I prepared to meet the enemy, or get loaded as it was for ducks, and blazed away at those awful brightness. This was all done quick as a flash, and without any of the cautions absolutely necessary if I had called to mind my position in that cranky dugout, and the caution demanded if I desired to maintain the position. Well, I didn't have either the wisdom or the caution; so, at the recoil, over went the canoe, and over I went, too—boat, gun, bag, ammunition and all. It was all done so quickly as to make my head swim. Well, that was all right, for swimming was necessary; and it was either swim or drown, and in water of the temperature of thirty degrees or thereabouts, at that. I swam to the nearest friendly stump, said the many Ohs! and Aughs! I grunted out. When I reached it, I found it was an impossibility to stay there; so, shaking myself together like a muskrat, I took to the water again, caught my dugout and hauled it alongside of a stump, and so by this time it was light—though I wasn't—I scooped a paddle and hook, fished out my gun, picked up my game, one of the largest of the owl kind, in fact, one of the largest I ever saw—and started for home, over a mile off, over the submerged meadow lands. The

ducks, as is usual, fairly swarmed around me, and seemed to delight in tantalising me with their near approach. I kept mum about this affair, burying that owl deep under ground, and my worthy parent did not hear of it for years afterward, for it my paternal ancestor had even suspected it, there would have been no peace in that household for me.

ANECDOTES OF THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

ONE of the most perilous rides on record is probably that of Mazeppa, around whom romance has cast a halo of heroism that he does not really deserve.

Ivan Mazeppa was born in 1645, and commenced his career in life as a page to Casimir, King of Poland.

A Polish nobleman, however, chanced to discover him in an act of treachery and ingratitude, and had him seized.

He caused him to be stripped naked and bound upon the back of his own horse, with his head toward the tail.

The horse did not carry him to the far distant Ukraine, however, as has been asserted, but merely to his own residence.

Thence, out of shame, Mazeppa fled to the Ukraine and joined the Cossacks, by whom in 1687 he was elected as hetman, or chief.

Peter the Great of Russia took him under his protection, and loaded him with honors, in return for which Mazeppa entered into treasonable negotiations with Charles XII. of Sweden, Peter's great enemy.

After the battle of Pultowa, Mazeppa had to fly for his life, and finally died in Bender, in 1709.

A capital story is related of an attorney, who, having to make a journey some years ago, determined to do so on horseback.

He accordingly purchased a noble-looking animal, and started off early one morning.

For a few miles all went well, but while crossing Blackheath, near London, a small chaise approached in the opposite direction, driven by a clergyman.

Without a touch of rein or spur the lawyer's horse cantered up to the chaise, and, pulling up across the road, instantly stopped it.

"You needn't pull out your pistol," said the clergyman, handing over his purse, "as I do not intend to resist."

After having apologized to the gentleman, the lawyer pursued his journey—but not in peace.

For before evening he had been shot at twice, in consequence of the horse's suspicious approach to different vehicles, and was finally taken prisoner by the police officers.

It was discovered that the horse had belonged to a notorious highwayman, and had evidently not forgotten the way in which he had been brought up.

Too many people are accustomed, when a horse has grown old in their service, and is of no more use to them, to sell the poor beast, which is generally condemning the animals to harder labor in their old age than they have had in their prime.

There is an anecdote related of a gentleman who had a horse he considered of no further use to him, and yet, having had the beast for many years, he did not wish it to be cruelly treated.

One day his servant told him that he could get the animal a good home with a neighboring farmer, who merely required him to ride around his farm.

The gentleman immediately allowed the horse to go, and thought no more of it.

However, a month or so later he was in town, and was attracted one day by a crowd assembled round an omnibus.

Approaching out of curiosity, he beheld his poor old favorite in harness.

He had fallen down stones, and was now being cruelly whipped in order to raise him once more to his feet.

The gentleman made inquiries, and the next day he repurchased the horse, and placed him in his own stables, determined that he should never leave them again until he was carried out.

Another good, though somewhat old, story on this subject, is that of the Duke of Calabria.

Charles, Duke of Calabria, was in the habit of sitting in council on certain days of the week in Naples in order to listen to complaints, and if possible redress them.

In order that any person, no matter how humble, might have access to him without favor or bribery, a wire was fixed to a bell in the court, from the outside entrance in the public thoroughfare.

One day the bell rang, and Charles gave orders for the applicant to be admitted, but nobody came.

Again he ordered that the person who had rang should be shown in, but one of the officers with a smile explained that it was only an old horse, who, in rubbing its head against the handle, had agitated the bell.

"Never mind," exclaimed Charles. "That makes no difference whatever. My court is free and open to all. Justice shall be done even to the brute creation. Show him in."

The horse was brought in, and after examining it, Charles ordered the owner to be sent for immediately.

This was an old baron, who had seen service in the wars many years before, and who, on being summoned to the court, acknowledged that the horse was his, and explained that he had been a very good one, and had carried him in many battles and for a number of years; but now he was worn out and too old for anything, he had turned him adrift from the stables, in order that he might provide for himself.

"Very good," observed the duke; "that is one side of the question; now for the other. You were once very useful to my father, and when you became too old to fight, and of no service, were you turned adrift or did you receive honors and a pension?"

The baron confessed that he had received a good pension that had regularly been paid to him.

"Very well, then," continued the duke; "if you would retain your pension, and my good opinion of you, go and provide for your old horse, as the State has provided for you."

It used to be the fashion in the last century for gentlemen to make wonderful bets respecting the powers of their respective horses.

One anecdote is related of a gentleman in Warwickshire who wagered a small sum that his horse was as sensible as any guest then present, and would behave himself as well.

This was after dinner, and after a certain amount of wine had been disposed of, the bet was made.

The gentleman proceeded to the stable, and had a favorite old hunter let loose.

The horse followed him up-stairs to the dining-room, eat a biscuit, and drank a bowl of wine.

Not content with this, he called the animal after him, and led him up-stairs into one of the bedrooms.

It was acknowledged that the bet had been won, and then they tried to get the horse downstairs again, but in vain.

Nothing they could do would persuade the animal to move, and ultimately the owner was obliged to have the side of the room knocked down before he could get his favorite back again into his stable.

Some of the bets on record, however, terminated in what can only be called excessive cruelty.

Some of the rides against time, for instance, and also where the owner has backed himself to go enormous distances, without drawing rein.

The first instance we can discover of a man being punished in a case of this kind for cruelty to animals was in 1817.

The case was tried at the Suffolk Sessions, and was against a butcher named Beard.

Beard made wager with a man named Gladding that he would ride a bay mare that he owned from his house to the "Bull" in Whitechapel, London, and back again in nineteen hours.

The distance was one hundred and thirty-eight miles.

The unfortunate animal, utterly worn out by the excessive exertion, fell down and died within a mile from Ipswich on its return journey.

Beard was found guilty, but in consequence of his general good conduct, and the contrition he evinced, he was only sentenced to pay a fine of five pounds.

On one occasion a gentleman in Sussex had a horse whose groom was much given to indulgence in strong drink; one afternoon this groom had been enjoying himself at the public-house, and on coming home had fallen into a ditch and gone to sleep.

The horse waited for his accustomed feed and drink, but it did not come, and at length getting tired of waiting he walked out of the stable he was in, slipped his head out of the halter, and took his way to the pump.

Upon arriving here he seized the handle between his teeth, and working it up and down, filled a pail that stood beneath, and then enjoyed his drink, which there is no denying he had earned.

Many anecdotes are told of the strange friendships formed by horses, whose aptitude for society is so great that he will attach himself to almost anything sooner than not have anything to love.

A Mr. White owned a horse that made friends with a hen.

They used to wander about together, and apparently understood each other thoroughly.

Instances of cats who have attached themselves to horses are also common; in one case when the horse died it got lost, and died a short time after her friend, literally dying of broken heart.

An extremely savage horse named Chillaby, but better known as the Mad Arabian, who had caused as many accidents as a railway collision, and who would only allow one man to approach her, and him only under protest, with her ears thrown back and the whites of the eyes showing, formed a very warm attachment to a lamb, with whom it spent many an hour, apparently in friendly communion.

A gentleman of Bristol owned a fine grayhound that was in the habit of sleeping in a stable with a hunter.

These animals became extremely fond of one another—so much so, that the horse became restless and fidgety whenever the dog was out of his sight. The dog would lick the horse's nose and face, and in return the hunter would scratch the dog's back with his teeth.

One day when the groom was out with the horse exercising it, and accompanied by the grayhound, the latter was set upon by a big dog, who knocked him over, and held him down on the ground.

In an instant the horse put back his ears, and in spite of all the efforts of the groom, rushed at the strange dog, who was worrying the grayhound, and seized him with his teeth.

He then shook him, holding him up by the back, until the skin gave way, when the miserable dog judged it wiser to run for his life.

AN OLD PUZZLE REVIVED.

IT is said that a gentleman in Paris has offered a prize of 20,000 francs to any one who will draw the annexed figure with a pencil or pen without lifting either from the paper or interfering with any line, or portion of a line previously made. "The thing can be done," and the doer has only to go to France, prove his ability to conquer the puzzle, and take the reward:



A FIGHT WITH A BEAR.

WE make the following extract from a hunting story entitled "The Big Bear of Wanneota," printed in *St. Nicholas* for May. The incident took place in one of the back counties of Arkansas, in the year 1860, and the hunters were Harvey Richardson and the narrator. They were after a big bear, whose depredations had made him the chief object of conversation; and they started out with their dogs early one November morning.

"Just at day-break we came to a crossing of the bayou where we felt sure the bear must pass on his way to the hills. Harvey placed me, the dogs and himself. A fallen tree was in my front, and through its interlaced roots I could see in every direction. Scarcely had we completed our ambush when a quick movement of one of the dogs startled me. But, in a moment, nothing that his looks were directed toward the crossing, I, too, looked thither, and heard the sound of a heavy animal sauntering slowly over the sodden ground and approaching my lair. In an instant a pair of yellow eyes glared at me, and with as wide a look of surprise as there was in mine. Recovering myself, I fired, at the monster, which appeared like a huge, animated black cloud as he rose up before me. The brute disappeared with the smoke of my gun, but in a moment I was startled by the report and shock of a second discharge. The other load of my gun had been accidentally exploded. Looking in the direction that the bear had taken, I saw he had run along the other side of the fallen tree and met at the further end the two dogs, when he turned about and came toward me at his most rapid speed and in savage humor. Then there was a fearful crash and rush. The black mass came on, with eyes gleaming, and bewildering me with a reflection of their glare in the sunlight.

"I was conscious that my gun was useless, and so instinctively grasped my pistol, but found it hopelessly entangled in my belt. For a second despair came upon me, but a sudden revulsion aroused every sense and prompted me to defense for life. Quickly drawing my knife, it was presented at a thrust as the dark mass sprang at me.

"At this moment, one of the huge dogs leaped at him so fiercely as to divert the monster's attention from myself and make him miss his bite. He reared, and as he again came down on his forefeet and was in the act of going over the bank, I plunged my knife to the hilt into his body, in the region of his heart. He turned and made a terrible snap at my legs, but at that moment I fell backward over a bush, and we all went into the bayou together, floundering in the water and mud.

"I scrambled to the edge of the slough, and watched with intense anxiety the result of the battle. In another moment, and when the bear had nearly reached the further side of the pool, desperately fighting with the dogs every inch of the way, I heard a whirring flight of more of the pack as they sprang over me. In the same instant a flash shot out from the brown barrel of Harvey's rifle, and the bear rolled over, though he still feebly fought the pack, and kept on fighting to the last moment of his existence. To my mortification, an examination of the huge carcass showed that my shot had not made any visible mark on the animal, and that my knife had not quite reached his heart. Harvey's shot had killed him. The weight of the savage animal was over five hundred pounds."

AN OWL AS A WATCHMAN.

AN owl in Providence, R. I., has recently covered himself with glory by an act which will go far to redeem the reputation which his species has long endured of solemn stupidity and general uselessness. The owl is the property of Mr. Orin A. Wehoskey, a locksmith doing business on Broad Street, and is kept in a cage by day, but at nightfall he is released, and he patrols that shop with sleepless vigilance all through the night. A burglar stealthily entered the shop one night, when the owl went for him. Its eyes were wide open, and after a short, fierce, and bloody battle the burglar slipped out, leaving Officer Owl the proud victor, the burglar beplexing in his haste to carry off his hat and "jimmy."

A QUICK-WITTED OLD MAN.

ONE day, recently, Maxwell Thompson, of Fentonville, Michigan, in going, in an intoxicated condition, to his home up the railroad track, fell into the cattle-guard and was unable to get out. Just at this moment the eastern-bound passenger-train was seen coming, and not over eighty rods distant. John Creeche, an old man about ninety years of age, ran and jumped into the cattle-guard and tripped Thompson down and held him there until the train passed. When Thompson was standing up his head and shoulders were just above the rails.

A SMALL HEROINE.

A LITTLE girl in Cincinnati recently saved a boy's life by a quick-witted piece of heroism that would have been remarkable and commendable even if performed by a full-grown man. A four-year old child, the son of James Fallis, who lives on the fourth floor of a house at the corner of Front and Ludlow Streets, was leaning over the rail of the fourth floor balcony and watching some children at play in the back-yard.

The little fellow had no sense of danger, and in his eagerness he even clambered up on the railing to get a fairer view of the children. Suddenly, however, he lost his balance, and falling over, he started whirling downward toward the brick pavement of the yard, fifty feet below.

On the balcony of the third floor, immediately below him, stood a little girl ten years old, the daughter of one of the residents of that floor. She saw the boy coming, and by an instinct or purpose which amounted to heroism, put out her arm to try to save the boy. She did catch him at the risk of being dragged over herself, and of falling with him.

Of course she could not hold such a weight, but her arm was just strong enough to turn the course of his fall, so that he landed at her feet on the floor of the third porch. His head struck the banister, and he had an ugly cut on his forehead, and one eye was considerably injured; but his life was saved. The little girl's arm was lamed, but not broken. She said she saw him coming and just thought she might save him if she would put out her arm, and she did it.

Young Pickwick's Schooldays.

CHAPTER XLIX.

[Continued from page 236.]

THE fair Susan planted herself at the end of the pathway.

"I shall have him now," she muttered to herself, working her bony fingers like a pair of claws as rapid footsteps were heard approaching.

The next moment Mr. Puckle, without his hat, and looking scared out of his wits, emerged from the shadowy covert.

Miss Mangle was down upon him instantly, and wound him up in her arms like a spider catching a fly.

"Mine! mine!" she cried, triumphantly.

"Murder!" yelled the terrified usher; "let me go!"

"Never, my own James, never!"

"I'm not James," gasped Mr. Puckle; "I'm Timothy. Release me, you ugly old woman!"

The excited damsel uttered a shriek on discovering her mistake and released her victim, and the emancipated Puckle plunged into the shrubs and fled in dismay, just as Miffins, hot in pursuit, came rushing down the narrow path.

"I'll have th' will'n'le life!" he shouted, as he dashed past, overturning Miss Mangle in a most reckless manner.

The Diddler stepped forward from his retreat and raised her.

"Take it cool, miss," he said, in his usual bland tones; "triv'al error—nothing more—will occur sometimes."

"Take me to my James!" cried the despairing damsel, "I cannot live without my James!"

"Look him up for you—two-two's," said the Diddler, briskly, about to hurry away.

But Miss Mangle would not let him pass.

"No," she cried; "I will accompany you. Where you go, I go."

As she spoke, she made a desperate grab at the Diddler, who, with a nimble, harlequin-like twirl, jerked himself out of her reach into the shrubs.

The ancient maiden staggered forward and fell on her hands and knees just in a convenient spot for Mr. Lightbody to tumble over and pitch on his nose.

The lady shrieked, and the irate Lightbody roared like a tiger, and the lively Diddler heard them as he hurried away to report the state of affairs to Mr. Parrot, who, in an intense state of perspiration, was dodging behind trees, and in and out the shrubs, to avoid falling into the fair Susan's clutches.

At length the Diddler encountered the anxious fair one again, and under pretense of leading her to her fiancé, he conducted her to a small outhouse and locked her in, taking away the key to the great joy of Mr. Parrot, who was able to sit down to dinner with his guests without fear of molestation.

The repast went off with much satisfaction to every one concerned—especially to Swags, who ate so much that he burst—that is, his white calico suit did, and he had to be carried to Mr. Glare's tent to sleep until the time for his aerial descent should arrive.

* * * * * *

The firework display was the grand feature of the *fête*, and when it was known that a real live Cupid was going to fly through the air in a shower of sparks, crowds of anxious spectators assembled in the grassy space opposite the colossal framework.

Doctor Waddle, as the evening advanced, had strolled down to the grounds, and was now with Mr. Puckle, who had greatly recovered himself, waiting for the spectacle.

Mr. Lightbody, who had found his daughter and lost her again, was irritable and fretful.

Miffins was not much better.

Miss Mangle, in the outhouse, shrieked herself hoarse, and had a fit of hysterics all to herself, brought on by her frantic efforts to break open the door.

The Diddler and his companions were in Mr. Glare's tent, assisting in dressing up Swags for his part of Cupid.

The fat youth slept soundly through it all, and perhaps it was quite as well that he did, or he might have objected to the proceedings.

He awoke just as the Diddler was putting a little artificial bloom on his cheek with a hare's foot.

It took some little time to explain to him what was going on, but at length he remembered.

"You're Cupid, you know," said young Pickwick, "and you're going to descend by a shower of sparks."

"Oh, ah! so I am," said Swags; "where's Polly?"

"She's among the audience, quite anxious to see how you perform your part," replied Tinkle.

This was received with a groan by the fat youth.

"How do I look?" he asked.

"Like a hog in armor," said young Pickwick.

"I should like to look at myself."

"Pass mirror," said the Diddler.

A small looking-glass was handed to Swags, in which, by dint of much perseverance, he was able to get a very fair idea of his general aspect.

"I think I shall do," he remarked.

"All up with Tuppy after this," laughed the Diddler. "Polly sure to fall in love—can't help it."

"I hope she will," exclaimed Swags, fervently.

"Play part well—must—certain."

"I think Cupid had better be getting up to the platform," said Mr. Glare.

"I hope the ladder's pretty strong," Swags remarked; "as I'm heavy."

"Strong as house," returned the Diddler, as they went outside; "up you go."

Up Swags went, and at length reached the top.

First the belt was fastened round his body.

Then a tin saucepan, surrounded by a large catherine-wheel, was placed upon his head, with the handle sticking out behind.

Then he was requested to lie down with his face to the floor, whilst the wire was passed through the ring in the belt.

"Capital!" said the Diddler; "feel all right, Swagsy, don't you?"

"Oh, yes; I'm all right."

"Now, then, the pyrotechnics."

The fireworks were handed by Mr. Glare to the Diddler, who proceeded to fasten squibs, crackers, revolving wheels and cases of sparks to every available part of the Diddler's fat youth, whilst as a finish he thrust a Roman candle into each of his hands.

It is needless to remark that by the time these energetic preparations were completed Swags looked about as much like Cupid as Robinson Crusoe or the wild man of the woods, might have done.

Everything being now ready, the Diddler rang a bell to attract the attention of the spectators.

Every eye was directed to the framework, and great excitement prevailed among the lookers-on, which was not diminished when the Diddler bawled in stentorian tones through a speaking-trumpet:

"Prepare! prepare! open your eyes and look! Cupid, god of love, is about to appear!"

"I say, Diddler," whispered Swags.

"What is it?" inquired the knowing one.

"I—I don't think I feel quite so comfortable as I did just now."

"Not comfortable? Oh, nonsense—must be."

"But I ain't," Cupid protested.

"Then you ought to be—what's wrong, eh?"

"The belt round my waist's too tight."

"Oh, that's nothing—must be tight, you know—if not, might slip through—dashed to pieces, and so on."

"But it cuts me."

"Won't feel it when you're set going," the Diddler assured him, cheerfully.

Swags made a strong effort to comply with the Diddler's injunctions, but he felt particularly helpless, and in anything but that light and sportive state of mind which should have characterized the frolicksome deity he represented.

"All ready!" exclaimed the Diddler. "Then launch him."

"No, no, stop!" cried Swags; "my nose itches."

"Scratch it."

"I can't; my hands are full."

"Never mind your nose," said the knowing one. "Now, then, off he goes!"

Swags, whether willing or unwilling, was propelled forward by Mr. Glare and the Diddler, until, being clear of the platform, he hung dangling from the wire, which swayed and trembled under his weight.

"Oh, Lor'! oh, dear! I'm sure I shall be out in half!" groaned Swags.

"Not you!" retorted the Diddler; "assume graceful attitude—smile at spectators."

"I can't see 'em."

"Will immediately; light up, Glare."

The pyrotechnist at once ignited two brilliant port fires, which lit up the scene with dazzling brightness, disclosing Cupid high up in the air, apparently floating in space, the wire being imperceptible.

The applause was tremendous.

Then Diddler shouted again through the trumpet:

"Cupid is now about to descend in a shower of glittering fire. Glare, light the pyrotechnics."

A long rod with a taper at the end of it was extended, and the flame was seen to flicker rapidly over Cupid's body as the fireworks attached to the different parts of his person were ignited.

For an instant there was silence—the silence of breathless expectation.

Then suddenly a tremendous fizz was heard, and Cupid appeared in a complete bed of sparks.

From head to foot—from every joint, finger and toe, he seemed to pour forth fire; whilst the revolving wheel on the helmet he wore spun round with bewildering rapidity.

Then the crackers went off with tremendous bangings, and the effect altogether was magnificent.

The spectators loudly shouted their approbation. Swags shouted, too, with all his might, but from an entirely different motive.

"Oh, murder!" he yelled; "I'm being suffocated—roasted! Let me go!"

The Diddler, having held him long enough for the lookers-on to witness the full effects of the pyrotechnics, released the string, and Swags glided rapidly down the wire, with the Roman candles throwing out balls of fire all the way.

By the time he had reached the ground the Diddler and Mr. Glare were there to receive him, and he was carried into the tent.

He was more frightened than hurt, and as black as a chimney sweep.

"Great success—splendid effect—very!" exclaimed the Diddler, with enthusiasm.

"I don't know how it looked," said Swags, ruefully, "but it felt awful. I don't think I should care about doing Cupid any more."

"Nonsense—looked part to perfection—every one said so—Polly Lightbody in ecstasies—told you she would be."

This idea consoled Swags greatly, and whilst he was getting out of his mythological dress into his own the Diddler was giving some special directions to his comrades for the carrying out of a plan which he had yet in contemplation.

This done he went out.

He had scarcely left the tent when he encountered Tuppy Tunstall in company with his pretty little sweetheart, Polly.

Tuppy looked particularly anxious, and as soon as they met he said:

"Here's a pretty go. What do you think?"

"What?" asked the Diddler.

"Old Lightbody's here. Looking everywhere for his daughter, and avowing to massacre me if he finds me."

"Unpleasant idea—very," said the Diddler.

"Awful," admitted Tuppy, who stood in great awe of his beloved one's irascible papa; "what's to be done?"

"Mustn't let him find you, that's all."

"How can I help it?" Tuppy asked.

"Keep out of sight."

"Where can I go?"

"I can tell you. See that arbor yonder?"

The Diddler pointed as he spoke.

"Yes, I see it."

"Retire thither—leafy shades—invisible to mortal eyes—Love among the roses, and so on—quite safe."

Tuppy, who looked much relieved, thanked him, and hurried his charmer as rapidly as possible into the sylvan retreat.

Scarcely had this been done when Mr. Parrot came hastening toward him.

"My peace of mind is entirely disturbed," gasped the latter, breathlessly; "didn't I understand you to say you'd locked up that—a—affectionate female?"

"Susan?"

"Yes."

"So I did—shut her in greenhouse—turned key upon her."

"Well, then, some one has either set her at liberty or she's broken out, for I've seen her wandering about, and I'm quite sure she's in search of me. Where can I hide?"

"Arbor yonder," returned the Diddler, indicating a small, leafy alcove in close proximity to the one in which Tuppy had secreted himself; "lovely creature never find you there."

Away rushed old Eat-my-wig without waiting to thank his informant. The Diddler was once more



A QUICK-WITTED OLD MAN.—HOW JOHN CRESSIE, AGED NINETY, SAVED MAXWELL THOMPSON. SEE PAGE 243.

alone. The object of his reflections was Miss Susan Mangle.

"Doating female," he soliloquized; "ancient and ugly—but rich, doubtless—oh, yes, must be rich—wants husband—evidently struck with me—don't see why I shouldn't—must see."

At this juncture the subject of his meditations caught sight of him.

"Oh, my, Fiddler; have I found you again!" she exclaimed, sentimentally.

"Excuse me—slight mistake—name not Fiddler—but Diddler."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I'm sure," she simpered; "but Diddler is such a—he, he—strange name."

"Not at all," the latter replied, grandly drawing himself up; "name of renown—Norman extraction—Diddlerio—powerful baron, and so on—fought battle Hastings—poke in the eye—orgal slightly damaged—runs in family."

"Ye-es, I see," returned the fair Susan, after gazing for a moment with interest at his swivel optic; "but what matters that? You are so agreeable."

"Rather—first water."

"And—a—rich?"

"Oh, yes; heir-at-law—boundless wealth—coin—title—estates—in perspective."

The fair Susan, encouraged by this dazzling prospect, clasped her hands, and smiled tenderly at the wealthy individual.

"Oh, how I love you!" she exclaimed, at length; "and you—do you return my affection? Do you—a—love me?"

The Diddler rolled his swivel eye round, and contemplated her in a pensive and abstracted manner.

"Must think—must reflect," he said, presently.

"Let us, then, retire to the shades of yonder arbor," said the sentimental damsel, "or he may come and interrupt us."

"He! Who?" asked the Diddler.

"Parrot; that elderly, soulless individual. He would tear me from you if he could. He is awfully jealous."

And linking her arm in that of her companion, she whispered:

"Come, come, sweet youth," and led him into the arbor in the remotest corner of which old Eat-my-wig lay couched.

"This is very nice and romantic, is it not?" continued the ancient maiden, after they had entered.

"Oh, very," returned the Diddler, abstractedly.

"Methinks I could dwell here for ever with you," she continued—"you who are so high-born and so rich."

This gave the Diddler the precise cue he desired, and he said:

"Yes, I am rich, and I suppose my sweetest Su—san has property also—a trifle in the hinds—few thousands, or something of that sort, eh?"

"Alas, no," sighed sweetest Susan, as she rested her head on her companion's shoulder; "my only wealth is the love of this poor heart, which I offer for your acceptance."

"Much obliged," thought the knowing one. "Must leave you a few moments—return presently."

"You'll not be long?"

"Oh, no."

And with a slight embrace, during which he hooked a string to which a dozen squibs were attached to her skirt, he left the arbor.

He had not taken half a dozen steps when he encountered Swags, who looked very doleful.

"I can't see anything of Polly Lightbody," he said, with a sigh that set him shaking like a jelly. "Can you tell me where I can find her?"

"Decidedly," returned the Diddler; "there—snug little retreat yonder—waiting for you."

He indicated the spot with his finger, and Swags, greatly revived, waddled off toward it.

It was as well, perhaps, he disappeared, for at that moment the loud, blustering voice of Mr.



AN OWL IN PROVIDENCE, R. I., DEFENDS HIS MASTER'S SHOP AND PUTS A BURGLAR TO FLIGHT. SEE PAGE 243.

Lightbody, who had just reached the spot, was heard.

"I can't find Polly," he exclaimed. "I hear she's been seen walking with that fat porpoise they call Swags. If I catch that villain I'll break every bone in his skin."

Catching sight of the Diddler, he inquired if he had seen anything of his daughter.

The latter replied in the negative, and slipping a handful of crackers into his pocket, with a quick match attached, he hastened to the tent.

Here he found all his comrades.

"Well, how have you got on?" he asked them.

"Capital," answered young Pickwick. "We've charged the doctor, and Puckle, and old Miffins, and a lot besides, with enough fireworks to last them for the rest of their lives."

"Good," responded the Diddler; "then now the next thing is to light 'em—come on Glare, all ready?"

"Yes."

They left the tent together, the Diddler leading the way to the spot where he had left Mr. Lightbody.

He was there still, raving about Polly, and Miffins, also, whose indignation against his friend Parrot had revived, and was uttering dark threats against him.

"I'll smash him when I find him," he growled.

"Would, if I were you, Miff," grinned the Diddler; "can't be far off."

Then giving a signal, Mr. Glare ignited two more port fires, and instantly the garden was lit up with a bright glare, rendering the interior of both the arbors perfectly visible.

The pictures they disclosed were somewhat amusing.

In the one the fat boy was discovered on his knees to Polly Lightbody; in the other, Miss Susan Mangle was hugging old Eat-my-wig round the neck, and all looked particularly scared at the sudden flood of dazzling light that encompassed them.

For a moment the spectators stood gazing in astonishment.

Then suddenly was heard the voice of Mr. Lightbody.

"Ha!" he shouted; "there's that villain Swags. Look at him, everybody! On his knees to my daughter!"

"And there's that wagabond Parrot!" cried Miffins, hoarsely; "sneakin' away under cover so as I shouldn't find him! Come out!" he bawled.

Both he and Mr. Lightbody were about to make a rush at the respective objects of their animosity, when suddenly a loud, fizzing sound was heard, and a shower of sparks began to pour forth from their pockets.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Doctor Waddle, in astonishment, as he approached, "what an extraordinary phenomenon! Never witnessed anything like it in my life; did you, Puckle?"

"Never, nev——"

Puckle stopped short and exclaimed:

"Why, doctor, you're fizzing, too."

"What, I?" cried the doctor. "Dear me, so I am! And—oh, Puckle—so are you!"

There was no doubt of this, and the next moment the horrified doctor and his assistant were dancing about streaming with sparks, crying "murder!—fire!" and popping and banging away like two crackers.

Nor was this all.

The fair Susan also began to fizz, and old Eat-my-wig went off with a tremendous bang from a dozen crackers in his pockets, and rushed out with a blazing catharine wheel attached to his back.

Suddenly Mr. Puckle experienced a great heat about his head, as a Roman candle, skilfully inserted in the crown of his hat, commenced shooting up its bright light and blue balls in a most lively manner. Every one shouted, and the confusion was tremendous.

Miffins was raving his loudest, when a sky-rocket shot up with a sharp hiss like a snake from behind his coat-collar, scorching his ear and shutting him up.

Crackers banged everywhere; wheels revolved on the crowns of hats and the ends of parasols.

The fiery serpents ran along the ground, and, to crown the whole, a grand device was let off on the top of the platform—"Many Happy Returns of the Day"—which, lighted up by colored fires, had a magnificent effect.

And with this ended the grand *fête* in honor of Mr. Parrot's fiftieth birthday.

CHAPTER L.

MORE ABOUT THE LOST LOCKET.

It will no doubt have been observed that for some time past the enmity between the Diddler and Bully Mungal had apparently been laid aside, the youths having, to all outward appearance, become tolerably good friends.

The Diddler had been too much engrossed by his numerous practical jokes to think about his missing locket, and the bully had seen no good opportunity of doing harm.

Besides, Mungal fancied that the seeming reconciliation of the Diddler, young Pickwick, and the others, was only part of a deep-laid scheme to enable them to play spy on them.

The day after the *fête* the boys had been thoroughly discussing the affair, when young Pickwick revived the subject of the missing locket.

"Quite forgot—strange—must see the doctor at once," said the Diddler; and off he walked to the doctor's room.

Having knocked at the door, he was bidden to walk in by the doctor, who was in rather an angry frame of mind, for he fancied the Diddler was the author of the practical joke of which he had been the victim.

"Doctor," said the Diddler, "I want to speak to you—important—very."

"I don't want to be bothered," cried the doctor.

"Oh, it doesn't matter at all," returned the Diddler; "will keep till next time—no doubt."

And he slowly walked away.

"Come back!" yelled the doctor.

He was naturally curious.

"Well, sir, what is it?" asked the Diddler, coming back.

"What do you want to say?"

"I wanted to tell you that I had found out who stole my locket," replied the Diddler.

And he told the doctor all that had been discovered.

"This is a strange tale," observed the doctor; "but I'll question Bully Mungal."

In obedience to the doctor's request, the Diddler went in search of Bully Mungal.

"The doctor wants you," cried the Diddler; "so look sharp."

"I'm coming as quick as I can," returned Bully Mungal. "I never hurry for any one."

He was very curious to know what the doctor wanted him for.

But he would not ask the Diddler.

The doctor was standing with his back toward the two boys as they approached him.

"You wanted me, sir?" said Bully Mungal, touching his elbow.

The doctor wheeled round.

He was looking very grave.

"Yes, I did ask to see you," he replied. "The Diddler has made a most serious charge against you, and if it is true, it will be my painful duty to expel you from the school."

The bully turned pale.

He saw that he had been found out in something. But he resolved, whatever it was, to deny it to the last.

"I didn't think the Diddler would be mean enough to try to injure me, because we have had a few fights together," he said, savagely. "I thought the quarrel was made up by this time."

The Diddler was about to reply.

But the doctor held up his hand.

"Listen," he cried.

The two boys obeyed.

Doctor Waddle turned upon Mungal.

"You have, or had a few days ago, a five pound note about you?" said the schoolmaster, abruptly.

"How do you know that?" stammered Bully Mungal.

"I do not know it," returned Waddle; "I ask you a question."

"I suppose I'm allowed to have pocket-money?" returned Bully Mungal, sullenly.

"But since your pocket-money comes through me, I cannot understand how you came to be so rich at the end of the quarter."

"Well, what if I choose to anticipate my allowance?" retorted Bully Mungal; "perhaps I borrowed that money from a friend."

"What friend?" asked the doctor.

"I decline to say," returned Bully Mungal.

"You won't get much out of him," observed the Diddler; "you'll have to inquire at another shop."

"How much longer am I to submit to this frightful impudence?" cried the doctor.



A SMALL HEROINE IN CINCINNATI SAVES THE LIFE OF A BOY WHO WAS FALLING FROM THE FOURTH FLOOR OF A DWELLING-HOUSE.—SEE PAGE 245.

Bully Mungal looked at him sullenly.

"Please to follow me to the library," said the doctor.

"Oh, I don't mind at all," returned Bully Mungal, going in advance of the doctor.

He thought he was going to have a taste of the doctor's cane.

But in this he was mistaken.

His offense, if it could be brought home to him, was of too serious a nature to be absolved by a thrashing.

"I'm going to have a conversation with your friend, Tom Ely," observed the doctor, "and in the meanwhile shall lock you in the library, so that I may know where to find you."

Bully Mungal growled something under his breath.

He had hoped to be able to warn Tom Ely of what was coming.

"Am I to go in?" he asked, pausing before the door of the library.

"Enter," said the doctor, shortly.

Bully Mungal entered, and the door was closed.

He heard the key turned in the lock, and knew that he was a prisoner.

"I'll have the door down," he exclaimed, kicking away with right good will.

"Keep it up, old man," said the Diddler, putting his mouth to the key-hole.

Bully Mungal gave the door another furious kick.

"That's it—good boy—do as I tell you," cried the Diddler.

And he ran off, laughing gayly.

Bully Mungal had been in a passion before.

But the Diddler's laughter added fuel to the flame.

The excited Bully snatched up a ruler and rushed toward the window.

Crash!

The ruler went flying through a pane of glass.

It alighted on the head of Mossy Morton, who happened to be passing at that precise moment.

"Hallos!" cried Mossy Morton, angrily, "what are you doing up there?"

"Oh, is it you?" said Bully Mungal, eagerly, with his body half out of the window.

"Yes, it is," returned Mossy Morton; "and I should very much like to know what you mean by flinging rulers at people's heads."

"I'm locked in here, and can't get out," said Bully Mungal.

"Who locked you in?"

"The doctor."

"What for?"

Bully Mungal related what had happened.

"And here I am locked in this beastly hole," he said, in conclusion.

"I had better find out Tom Ely and tell him to be on his guard," cried Mossy Morton.

"The very thing I was going to ask of you," observed Bully Mungal.

"I'm off, then," said Mossy, hurrying away.

He was back again in a moment.

"Well, what now?" asked Bully Mungal, impatiently.

"Do you know where Tom has gone?" asked Mossy, shading his eyes from the sun, and looking up at Mungal.

"You'll find him walking along the road toward the turnpike," returned Bully Mungal; "be quick, now; the doctor is looking for him in the playground."

Morton once more hastened away.

In the playground he came face to face with Doctor Waddle, who was walking arm-in-arm with the Diddler.

"Morton!" exclaimed the schoolmaster.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know where Tom Ely is? The Diddler and I have been looking for him everywhere."

The Doctor was very agreeable to the Diddler.

Should that eccentric youth regain possession of the locket, he would become a very important personage in the doctor's eyes.

"I don't know where Tom is at all," said Mossy Morton, innocently, in answer to the doctor's query; "but I'll look for him if you like."

"Do so," said the doctor, and Mossy Morton hurried away.

He walked for some distance along the highway, before he saw any sign of Tom.

He was about to turn back, when he happened to glance across a field.

Then he saw the one of whom he was in search.

But Tom Ely was not alone.

By his side walked a man in a slouched hat, and long black cloak.

Mossy Morton gave a low whistle.

He watched the two, himself unseen, for some time.

The man in the long cloak was angry or excited. Mossy could not hear what he was saying, but he noted his every gesture.

He saw the man take out a pocketbook and give a slip of paper to Tom Ely.

Then the man and boy clasped hands and parted.

Tom Ely walked across the field and approached the gate, by the side of which Mossy Morton was standing.

"Hallos!" he cried. "How long have you been here?"

"Oh, some time," returned Mossy Morton; "but I did not wish to interrupt your conversation with that interesting stranger in the long cloak."

"He wanted to know the way, you know," faltered Tom Ely.

"No doubt," replied Mossy. "We'll resume the subject at a more favorable opportunity. At present we have something else to think of. You are in a pretty mess."

"What do you mean?"

"The Diddler has told the doctor everything."

"About what?"

"About the locket."

Tom Ely turned pale.

"How?" he asked.

"All through your folly," said Mossy Morton. "You betrayed yourself in your sleep the other night, like an idiot. He has accused you to the doctor."

"Does Waddle believe him?"

"Yes."

"Then the best thing we can do is to look it from the school. We are both in the same boat."

"Do nothing of the kind," said Morton.

"I suppose you think it would be a joke to get expelled."

"No, I don't; but I am sure there is no danger. You'll soon talk the doctor over."

"I don't like the job, and would prefer to cut my stick. What good can I do?" said Tom.

"You must say that you heard rumors that the Diddler has accused you of stealing the locket, and stoutly deny that the story has any foundation."

"What if he refuses to believe me?"

"Hint that you will make it worth his while; say that your friends are very influential, and will spare no expense to punish the Diddler."

"Do you think the doctor would take the bait?" asked Tom Ely.

"Yes, snap at the chance; but you must take care not to make it seem too much like a bribe. You must go in for gratitude, and all that kind of thing," replied Morton.

"When shall I tackle him?"

"Now; nothing like striking while the iron is hot."

"Hadn't I better wait until he sends for me?"

"No," said Mossy Morton, emphatically. "The doctor told me to come in search of you, and I don't want to have to return to the house and tell him that you will not come."

"Don't do that," said Tom Ely. "I'll see him at once."

"Wait a minute," said Mossy Morton, with a sly glance at his companion. "Did that guardian of yours give you any money when he left you with Waddle?"

"Well, yes," replied Tom Ely, hesitatingly; "he left me five-and-twenty pounds, but it was only to be used in an emergency."

"The time has arrived," said Mossy Morton. "You must present it to the doctor in recognition of his care and kindness."

"Do you think it would pay?" said Tom, who did not like parting with his money.

"I'm sure of it," returned Mossy Morton.

"You won't come in with me to back me up?" said Tom Ely.

They had reached the playground.

"No, thank you," returned Mossy. "I'll leave you to fight your own battles."

Tom Ely walked straight into the presence of the doctor.

That gentleman had dismissed the Diddler, and retired to his dining-room to solace himself with a glass of wine.

"I hear that I have been accused of stealing the Diddler's locket," said Tom Ely, "and I am here to refute the charge."

"The Diddler tells a very plausible story," observed Doctor Waddle.

"The Diddler is a liar," cried Tom Ely, a dull flush suffusing his face.

"Don't say that," returned the doctor, lifting his hand. "Appearances are very much against you, and unless you give me a satisfactory explanation, I shall be under the painful necessity of expelling you and Bully Mungal from the school."

"You won't do that," said Tom Ely; "I am innocent."

"Prove it to me," said the doctor, "and I will punish the Diddler severely for daring to make a false statement."

"I think I can prove it to your entire satisfaction," said Tom Ely, with a smile.

"How?" asked the doctor.

"In the first place, let me ask you to accept this as a small token of gratitude for all your kindness to me during the time I have been here," said Tom Ely.

And he produced the slip of paper which had been given to him by the man in the cloak.

It was a note for five-and-twenty pounds.

"If I am really going to be sent away," he continued, "I should like to think that I had made some poor return for all the kindness and consideration I have received at your hands."

The doctor hesitated.

He knew that Tom Ely wished to bribe him, and felt that he ought to be indignant at such an offer.

But it was a great temptation.

Doctor Waddle had got into pecuniary difficulties.

He had borrowed money at a high rate of interest to start his school, and for a long time the interest had taken away most of his profits.

"Come, sir, take it, to please me," said Tom Ely.

And in the end the bank-note found its way into the doctor's pocket.

"How came the five pounds in Bully Mungal's possession?" he said, significantly. "That must be accounted for."

"Easily done," said Tom Ely. "I lent him the money."

"Why did he not say so?" said the doctor.

"He had one of his sullen fits on, I suppose," returned Tom Ely.

"You have explained matters to my entire satisfaction," said the doctor; "but I must tell you one thing."

"What's that?" asked Tom Ely.

"The Diddler must find his locket, or something unpleasant may happen. If the locket is returned to him, no more will be said."

"Oh, he'll be sure to find it," said Tom Ely, with a smile. "He has mislaid it, somehow."

"It may be as you say," returned the doctor.

He had just dismissed Tom Ely when the Diddler reappeared, accompanied by young Pickwick.

"Well, sir, said the latter, "what did Tom Ely say for himself?"

"Denied all knowledge of what had become of my locket, of course," said the Diddler. "Bad fellow—ought to be kicked."

"He certainly denies that he or Bully Mungal ever touched your locket," said the doctor, slowly.

"But do you believe it?" said the Diddler.

"Tom Ely spoke to me in a very manly and straightforward manner," returned the doctor; "and I can't help thinking you a very bad boy to wrongfully accuse your schoolfellow."

"Oh, that's how the wind blows," cries the Diddler. "He has money and I have none—that is the way the game is won—too bad—upon honor."



YOUNG PICKWICK'S SCHOOLDAYS.—"THE DIDDLER AGAIN POLITELY KISSED MISS MANGLE'S HAND."—SEE PAGE 243.

"Hold your tongue, sir," cried the doctor.

"The truth is not always agreeable," muttered young Pickwick.

Doctor Waddle turned red.

He acted a base part in order to get out of his difficulties.

His conscience made him a coward, and he could scarcely look his scholars in the face.

"I excuse your heat, Diddler," he said, as he stood before them with averted gaze; "but don't let your temper get the better of you again, or I shall punish you severely."

"How did Tom Ely prove his innocence?" asked young Pickwick, motioning to the Diddler to be silent.

"He proved it to my satisfaction," returned the doctor, "and we both believe that you have dropped your locket, and you will find it somewhere about the house."

"Come away, Diddler, said young Pickwick, trying to drag his chum out of the room. "You can't expect to find justice here, but right will win in the end, old boy."

"The time will come when you will regret the way you have treated me," said the Diddler, turning upon his schoolmaster.

As the boys left the room, the doctor sank down in a chair and put his hand before his eyes.

He felt the meanness of his conduct, but he had not the moral courage to resist the temptation.

Five-and-twenty pounds had overbalanced the doctor's scale of justice.

[To be continued.]

"Young Pickwick's Schooldays" was commenced in No. 685.

A SMALL boy had seen his mother's fur muff that had been badly eaten by moths. Shortly afterward he was in his father's stable watching the process of currying his pet pony. The animal was shedding its coat, and consequently large bunches of hair came out with each application of the comb. With tears in his eyes the little fellow rushed into the house and exclaimed, "Oh, mamma! mamma! the moths have got into my pony, and I'm afraid he's ruined!"

ALPHABETICAL CURIOSITIES.

THE protean nature of the vowel sound is familiar to all. A few amusing examples will show that the consonants are nearly as bad.

B makes a road broad, turns the ear to bear, and Tom into a tomb.

C makes lime clime, hanged changed, a lever a clever, and transports a lover into clover.

D turns hear into beard, a crow to crowd, and makes anger danger.

F turns lower regions into flower regions.

G changes a fish to song, and makes one gone.

H changes eight to height.

K makes now know, and eye keyed.

L transforms pear into a pearl.

N turns a line into linen, a crow into crown, and makes one none.

P metamorphoses lumber into plumber.

Q of itself hath no significance.

S turns even into seven, have shave, and word sword, a pear spear, makes slaughter of laughter, and ominous changes having a hoe shaving a shoe.

W does well, *e. g.*, hose or whose; are becomes ware, an won, omen women, so sow, vie view; it makes an arm warm, and turns a hat into—what?

Y turns fur into fury, a man into many, to to toy, a rub to ruby, ours to yours, and a lad to a lady.

"I CAN SWIM, SIR."

DURING a terrible naval battle between the English and the Dutch, the English flag-ship, commanded by Admiral Narborough, was drawn into the thickest of the fight. Two masts were soon shot away, and the mainmast fell with a tear of crash upon the deck. Admiral Narborough saw that all was lost unless he could bring up his ships from the right.

Hastily scrawling an order, he called for volunteers to swim across the boiling water, under the hail of shot and shell. A dozen sailors at once offered their services, and among them a cabin-boy.

"Why," said the admiral, "what can you do, my fearless lad?"

"I can swim, sir," the boy replied. "If I be shot, I can be easier spared than any one else."

Narborough hesitated; his men were few, and his position was desperate. The boy plunged into the sea, amid the cheers of the sailors, and was soon lost to sight. The battle raged fiercer, and, as the time went on, defeat seemed inevitable. But, just as hope was fading, a thundering cannonade was heard from the right, and the reserves were seen bearing down upon the enemy. By sunset the Dutch fleet was scattered far and wide, and the cabin-boy, the hero of the hour, was called in to receive the honor due to him. His bearing so won the heart of the old admiral that he exclaimed:

"I shall live to see you have a flag-ship of your own."

The prediction was fulfilled when the cabin-boy, having become Admiral Cloudesley Shovel, was knighted by the king.

A WONDERFUL FEMALE.

THERE are many persons who, if we are to place full credence in their biographers, must have been extraordinary marvels of precocity and cleverness. Anne Maria Schurman, for example, who was the boast of Germany, was one of this description.

At the age of six, and without any instruction, she cut in paper the most delicate figures; at eight she learned in a few days to paint flowers, which, it should be added, were highly esteemed; and two years later it cost her only five hours' application to learn the art of embroidering with elegance. Her talents for higher attainments, we are told, did not develop themselves till she was twelve years of age, when they were discovered in the following manner: Her brothers were studying in the apartment where she sat, and it was noticed that whenever their memories failed in the recital of their lessons, the little girl prompted them without any previous knowledge of their tasks except what she had gained from hearing the boys con them over.

In her education she made extraordinary progress, and is said to have perfectly understood the German, Low Dutch, French, English, Latin, Greek, Italian, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldean, Arabic, and Ethiopian languages. Her knowledge of science and her skill in music, painting and sculpture were also extraordinary; and her talent for modeling was shown by the wax portrait she contrived to make of herself with the aid of a mirror. When it is added that her letters were not only valuable for the elegance of their style, but for the beauty of the written characters, which caused the said epistles to be preserved as cabinet curiosities, we may judge what a prodigy of cleverness was foreshadowed by the talents she displayed as a child.

SREED OF TROTTING HORSES.

THE following record shows the marked improvement in the speed of trotting horses within the last sixty years: In 1826, the best mile time was 3:00; in 1830, 2:40; in 1840, the best record by Dutchman, 2:30; in 1850, Lady Suffolk made a mile in 2:26; in 1860, Flora Temple made a record of 2:19¾; in 1870, Dexter trotted a mile in 2:17¾; in 1875, Goldsmith Maid completed a mile in 2:14; in 1878, Rarus (against time) made a mile in 2:13¼; on the 9th Sept., Edwin Forrest made a mile in the unparalleled time of 2:11¾.

THE JANITOR'S BOY.

A STORY OF NEW YORK.

By WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUSY as that day was, it came to an end at last; but Phil Hawkins and Silas Morgan had still some little odds and ends of office-work to attend to when Mr. Dunman put on his hat to go.

Mr. Pomnerby had set out to "catch his train" an hour before, for it was now between four and five o'clock.

"Leave everything all right, Boys, and be on time in the morning."

"We will, sir," said Phil, and Silas added, confidently:

"Yes, sir."

He felt as if he were becoming a "merchant" at a sort of racing pace, although he was gradually opening his eyes to the fact that "merchant" was a very large word, and meant a great deal more than he had ever imagined.

It was quite likely he would find a still deeper meaning in it before he had been in the city long.

Just now, the duties before him and Phil were simple enough, and the two boy soon finished them and were making their way to the street, who should come in but their cute acquaintance, the Janitor's Boy!

"Your day's done. Mine's just beginning," he remarked, with the air of a man on whose shoulders a heavy responsibility rested.

"Going to have any more fires to-night?" asked Phil.

"If you are," added Silo, "I want to stay and see the fun."

"There isn't much fun at a fire down here, except that it's pretty sure to draw a crowd. Nothing else will, after business hours."

"Pretty lonely down here, then, I guess," said Phil.

"Nicest part of town, soon as we get rid of our foreign population."

"Foreign population?"

"Yes," drawled Vandy. "Bankers and brokers, and lawyers and clerks, and all such raff. Fellows that have to board and sleep somewhere else. Sort of foreigners. At least they are after six."

"Phil," said Silas, "is there anything down here worth seeing?"

"What, at night? How should I know? I never staid to see."

"Didn't you? I'd like to, then. You'd be as green as I would."

"So I would——"

"And greener, too," interrupted Vandy. "It's a great place. The whole city used to be down here when I was a boy."

"When you was a boy?" exclaimed Phil. "What are you now?"

"One of the oldest inhabitants. Tell you what, if you fellows want to see down-town, I'll take great pleasure in showing you around."

There was a sort of lordly condescension in Vandy's manner which made Silo and Phil feel his story about the gloves, but it struck him that he could scarcely do anything better with his evening, and the arrangement was made in two minutes. Both the up-town boys were to meet Vandy at the office door before eight o'clock, and they talked about it all the way up as they went to their suppers.

Silo Morgan called it "supper," and Phil "dinner," but the country boy had all his life dined at about noon, and could not quite fall into city ways at once. His five o'clock "lunch," therefore, was still his heartiest meal.

Silo had gone to the extravagance of a second cane to replace the one he had broken on the hook-nosed pickpocket, and he had bought one a trifle heavier and stronger.

"If I have to punch another man," he said, "it'll make him squeal louder than that one did."

"I'll show 'em," remarked Vandy, as he saw them walk off up the street. "They're nice boys, but don't I wish I had their chances? It'll all be easy going for them, just as many and finish to start them. Anyhow, I'm going to strike out. My first venture's made already. Wonder if old Mother Bounce'll do as well for the partnership as she did for herself. It puzzles me how she manages to make money on an apple stand. Only she puts a steep price on her fruit and peanuts."

So she did, and she sold a great many in the course of the season; but there was reason for Vandy's trouble about the arithmetic of it. If she sold a hundred apples at three cents apiece, when they had only cost her half a cent, her profits would be two dollars and a half. He knew that. But how many days would there be in which a hundred apples would go from that stand at that price?

"There's the peanuts, and candy and oranges, and cocoanuts, and bananas. Money to be made on all of them, so long as there's plenty of customers and none of 'em spoilt on her hands. But the boys steal a heap in the course of the season. I must keep an eye on that."

Vandy was beginning to know something about the cares and anxieties of trade. That thought even occurred to him whether an apple-stand could be insured against fire.

That is, against being knocked into the gutter, promiscuously, by a crowd running to a fire.

"Couldn't be done!" he exclaimed. "No company would take the risk. But I would, on other than cotton and tobacco, with turpentine and resin in the upper story of the same building. Dunman must have paid extra for that. Hullo! I mustn't say anything against Dunman. He's a perfect brick."

But if Vandy MacNamara was anxious about money matters, so was the senior partner of the new firm of "Old Mother Bounce & MacNamara," as Vandy had seen fit to name it, in his soliloquies.

Clip's grandmother returned at supper time, and a very good meal she prepared for the bride now invalid. She even ate of it pretty freely herself, but it was plain that something was preying upon her mind.

She had heard enough that day, even before she read the report of Vance & Madderley's failure in the evening papers, to know that her chance for recovering anything of consequence there was small indeed.

"It's hard on a lone woman," she muttered, as she climbed the stairs; "but I'll bear it's to be the lot of me. I'm not the was to be hate by one misfortin. Sure an' it's glad I am none of Clip's money went to the bad in that schais."

Clip's money? Was the cripple there an heiress?

Not exactly. But when people are killed by railways, and their relatives are as keen as old Mother Bounce, the roads are very apt to have to pay for it. Then, too, Clip's grandmother was just the person to put that payment where it would "grow," instead of being used up.

"She'll not starve after I'm gone, bedad. But it's toime I set mesilf at worruk to mek friends for her. It's growin' old I am."

But that she showed any signs of failing strength. Not she.

But, then, a smart loss, in such a way as she had that day thrown away her money, was the thing to make any human being feel a little "older" than usual.

Mother Bounce, therefore, was feeling pretty old, in spite of all her efforts to appear cheerful, and, for fear Clip would notice it, quite as much as for any real necessity, she pleaded an errand, as soon as she had washed the tea-things, and sallied out again.

She was pretty sure to scent out something in the way of business, with such a feeling of hunger for it as her loss had given her.

Clip remained in her easy-chair, looking up at the ceiling, and for a moment or so she hummed to herself a fragment of a little song.

There were whole books of songs among the others on the table, and Clip knew them all, but she did not put out her hand for any of them. She only hummed and hummed, and then lay silent, while a new train of thought came up in her mind.

"Day after to-morrow," she said, aloud. "I wonder if it will hurt me as much as it did the last time? Oh, dear, how it did hurt, and how long they were about it! I thought they would never get done. Couldn't I say make it easy for me? They said it was best not to chloroform me so long. No, I'll bear it——"

The brave look came to her pretty lips again, in spite of a bit of a tear in her eyes and a tremor in her voice, as she added:

"Pen, you wouldn't take anything, would you? Do mocking-birds ever have any accidents?"

Pen may not have understood her, and it may be he was discontented to find the room growing shadowy, for he only replied with a few low, mournful attempts at a whistle, and then sat, still on his perch.

"Pen's bedtime," said Clip. "Go to sleep, Pen. That's what I'd like to do. But, somehow, I can't sleep as I'd like to. I'd like to sleep all night if I could, as I used to when there was a good moon. Then it's nice to lie awake. But it's dreadful to lie awake in the dark, when you're tired of lying down and want to sleep. Or if you want to get up and walk about and can't."

She was just the sort of girl that would have liked to get up and walk about, just as Pen was the sort of bird that would have been better pleased with the free use of his wings, and with a nest of his own and plenty of other birds to imitate and make fun of.

It was a little hard, but neither girl nor bird could escape from their prison in that upper room.

CHAPTER XIV.

IF there had been any anxiety among the good ladies, old and young, at the Pomnerby Villa that night, there was all dissipated when old Mr. Pomnerby brought back from the city the very cheerful face he did.

"Well in mind, my dear," he said, to his wife. "And I didn't let Dunman get ahead of me. I somehow or other kept up for not having more. Didn't give him a chance to say: I told you so."

And they all laughed with him, and were shortly in the full tide of a discussion of their plans for the Summer.

Mr. Dunman, too, appeared as usual at his club and met other up-town haunts, and all his business acquaintances understood, as soon as they looked in his placid and satisfied face, that the fire had not been much of a trouble.

"Why should it?"

"To a house like that?"

"Of course not. Did you see the list of the insurances in the evening papers?"

"Certainly. All good. They do their business safely. Just the sort of house I'd like to deal with. Wouldn't mind a fire like that myself. Everything that was burned was just sold that way to the insurance companies."

That was what it amounted to, in fact; but then the property was burned, and the world was just so much the poorer, for all that.

People are apt to forget that whatever is lost is lost to somebody, and there's no such thing as helping it. All you can do is to divide losses, so they don't all fall on one or two men.

But Phil Hawkins and Silas Morgan were not thinking of money matters.

Phil had been asked and thought about their plan for the evening, the bigger thing it appeared to them, only Phil would not have said as much to his friend from the country.

Silo could scarcely have imagined how many city boys there are who know nothing at all of the great town they live in, except a few streets and a few special places and buildings.

Vandy MacNamara was no such boy, however, and when the two young "sucking" merchants of Pomnerby & Co.'s, as he called them, came strolling into Otter Street again, he was on the appointed spot, ready to tell them all he knew.

Phil was quite ready to let Vandy do the talking, and Silo was not likely to do anything more than ask questions.

Vandy asked the first.

"Do you know," he said, "why the streets are narrower and crookeder down here than they are up-town?"

"Can't guess," said Silo.

"Well, this was the old Dutch town, and all the streets were laid out by the cows."

"Cowpaths?" said Silo. "Why, no cow would wander around this way."

"Dutch cows, my boy," said Vandy, majestically. "They went just where they took a notion. We've sent up some of the old paths, now the cows are gone, and we've made some wide enough for a yoke of oxen, but we haven't changed the directions much."

"Was this all Dutch?"

"Well, it was Indian first. That was before my time. Then it was Dutch; then British——"

"They were, at that moment, coming out on Broadway, near the Bowling Green."

"British?" said Silo.

"Yes; do you see that place? It's the Bowling Green. Folks used to play ten-pins there, on the grass. There was a statue there of George the Third, and our boys melted him down for bullets in the Revolution."

"Melted him down?" said Phil.

"He was all of lead. I read about it in a book Mr. Dunman lent me. Do you see that row of big houses?"

"Whew! what wide ones!" said Silo. "And they're all of brick."

"Big houses all around here," said Vandy. "Used to be the aristocratic part of the city when I was a boy."

"What is it, now you're a girl?" asked Phil Hawkins, with a grin.

"All business. Let's go on down to the Battery."

"And see the guns," said Silo.

"Not a gun there for a hundred years," said Vandy. "Longer, too; but the big guns of the city used to go down there after tea for a walk around."

It seemed that Vandy really had learned a good deal from his books, or in some other way, about the neighborhood he was born in, and both his companions listened eagerly to what he had to tell them.

"What's that big round concern?" asked Silo, as they were crossing the wide, open space of the Battery.

"That? That's Castle Garden, where Jenny Lind did her biggest singing to her biggest crowd. No other place in the city would hold 'em."

"What do they with it now?"

"Let the emigrants in there. All have to pass that gate. I heard a man say once that if New York was a barrel Castle Garden was a bung-hole for it. Sure there have poured people in, you know."

"Guess it wouldn't be so full as it is, then, if it wasn't for the bunghole," said Phil.

"That's the way with barrels. Now look out on the bay. Glad the night isn't dark, but I wish we had a better moon."

"I say!" exclaimed Silo, "why can't we get a boat and have a ride on the water?"

"Just as easy as not, if you only know how."

"Don't you know how?"

"Course I do. Can you manage a boat?"

"Can, first rate," said Silo. "We live near a lake at home."

"I can row a little," said Phil.

"All right, then; we won't need a boatman. We can have a jolly time of it."

It was an unusual thing to do, and very few men or boys, from the city or the country, ever think of doing it. In fact, in the daytime the harbor of New York is by no means a safe place for a pleasure-boat. Even when there is no wind blowing the great ferryboats and steamers keep up a continual swell, and a boatman needs to be pretty skilful, or he may get upset, not to speak of his chances for being run into by one of the numberless tugs and lighters. There is no sort of fun in such a pleasure trip as that.

At night, however, the water is quieter, like the land, and a small boat has a better chance for its life. Very few ever go out then, under the impression, perhaps, that there is nothing to be seen in the dark.

That's a mistake, for the dark itself, with so many gas-lights shining through it, is something well worth seeing.

Our three young adventurers were soon in a boat—a stout, well-made yawl, not too large, but able to do battle with pretty rough water if need be. Vandy obtained it from a waterman near one of the ferryhouses, with whom he seemed to be on terms of intimate acquaintance.

"How came you to know him?" asked Phil.

"Know him! Why, he's another great man that was born in Otter Street. Get in, boys."

It was easy pulling, for the tide was not running very strong, and they were quickly out of the dock.

"Up that way is the Hudson," said Vandy, holding out his left arm toward the northwest, "and out there to the right is the East River."

"So is the Sound," said Phil, glad to show that he knew it. "Let's pull that way."

Silo would scarcely keep his head still a moment, what with the city and its lights, the ferryboats, like great lanterns, gliding swiftly through the darkness, and the hundred other things that called on him to strain his eyes in this and that direction.

Vandy had the oars and Phil was steering, and the latter put them in a little closer than was necessary to the end of the first long pier they came to.

There was no danger, to be sure, and his friends could not guess why Vandy uttered so sharp an exclamation as the boat floated by and he looked up.

There was a woman at the pier-end, all alone, and she seemed to be waiting for some one, but Vandy did not say aloud as he did to himself:

"Mother Bounce! What can she be after, out there at this time o' night? Not peanuts, I reckon."

Scarcely, but he did say aloud:

"Out, Phil; out to the stream. It we should knock the end off one of these piers we'd have to pay the city for it."

"Who'd pay as if it knocked our heads off?"

"The city wouldn't. No more would Pomnerby & Co. How do you like it, boys?"

"Splendid!" exclaimed Silo.

"Hold in, Vandy! Look out, Phil! It'd be awful for us to sink a ferryboat like that."

So it would have been, although the monster was by no means crowded, and Vandy lay upon his oars as she ploughed on through them.

"One of the Wall Street boats," Vandy was saying, as the tide carried him into her rolling, heaving wake, but the words were scarcely out of his mouth before there was a splash in the water, a loud cry, and then a shout from the boat of:

"Man overboard!"

"Pull, Vandy!" screamed Silo. "I saw him go in. Pull!"

Vandy pulled and Phil steered in obedience to Silo's half frantic directions, while a crowd of dark figures on the boat, as she backed her engines, called to them with all sorts of advice.

"Pay no attention to 'em," said Vandy. "The critter's sure to come up, even if he's tryin' to make a suicide item for the reporters."

A few vigorous strokes of the oars brought them to where Silo could see, suddenly appearing on the top of a wave, what looked like the head of a man.

"Pull, Vandy! Easy, now. I've got him!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" screeched a half-strangled voice from under Silo's outstretched hand. "Take hold of my (hic) coat-collar. What's the (hic) use of pulling my (hic) hair out?"

"He isn't drowned," said Silo. "No suicide."

"Not a (hic) suicide, boys. Let me get hold of the (hic) boat. I won't upset you."

"See you don't, then," said Vandy, as the man in the water laid his hand on the gunwale.

"Have you got him?" shouted a voice from the ferryboat, which was now backing toward them.

"All right," sang out Silo. "We've got him, safe and sound."

"Do you want us to put you on board the boat?" asked Phil of the stranger, as he floundered over into the wherry.

"On board, and be made an item of? Not by (hic) any means. Tell 'em you'll shore me."

"We'll put him ashore," shouted Vandy. "He'll be safer with us than he would be on such a craft as that."

A loud laugh answered him, and it may be the officers of the ferryboat were quite willing not to be longer delayed over a matter of such small importance as a tipsy passenger overboard.

The engine bell sounded, the paddle-wheels worked, the boat was headed for her slip, and the three boys were left with their dripping prize out there in the middle of the East River.

"Boys," he said, as he looked around him on his preservers—"boys, do you know the (hic) East River's just the prettiest (hic) place I ever got into in all my (hic) life! That's a (hic) fact."

CHAPTER XV.

OLD Mother Bounce had indeed been looking for some one, as she stood at the head of that ancient and badly-smelling pier; but whoever it was she expected, she suddenly drew back as the boat and the three boys floated by with:

"Saints protect us, now! That was the very face of him! Was it sent for a warnin' to me? No, indades, it couldn't be! been Vandy. What for wud he or the loikes of him be doin' on the wather at this toime o' night? Is it gettin' cracked I am, with sthocks and brokers and all sorts o' villains? Hist, there's another pair of oars!"

And not half a minute more a yawl of twice the size of the first came swiftly along under the point she stood on, halting with a promptness which spoke well for the vigor and skill of the two brawny fellows who held the oars.

"Is it all right, Mother Bounce?"

"Under-sta' it be, I'll take them. Ye say they're honestly kem by?"

"Honest as the day. Do ye s'pose we sthole 'em?"

"Not a bit, honey. But there's ownly the half of what I was promised."

"The other half's comin', then. Could ye pay us somethin' on account?"

"Do yez doubt me worrud?"

"Not a bit, Mother Bounce, but I've never a shot in the locker, an' my mate's the same."

"There's tin dollars for yez, thin. It's all ye'll get the night."

"Isn't it enough? I'm satisfied. Be sure ye lave yer door handy. The cops may be on the look."

"What if they be? Didn't yez tell me it was on the square?"

"So it is, granny," laughed the man, who had held up his hand for the money, as he dropped into his seat again. "Give way, Bill. It's a good night for us. Take care of yer handsome self, Mother Bounce."

There was something almost like a smile on the old woman's face as she walked briskly away.

"If the cops come the night, it's little they'll find," she muttered. "I wonder what Vandy'd say to a share in a cigar dhe-van?"

A very curious sort of a person was old Mrs. Bounce, and very queer people were those with whom some of her business seemed to be transacted. The man in the boat, for instance, bore a strong family resemblance, to say the least, to the one who had stopped her in the street to say a word or two about the cocoanuts.

Her present errand was done, however, and she rapidly made her way to her own "headquarters," and up the rickety stairs.

Her first exclamation on entering the room was:

"Clip, darlin', did I lave ye in the dark the while?" It's a careless ould woman I'm gettin' to be. Was there no matches?"

"Matches enough, grandma, and the drop light's here on the table, but the gas isn't turned on."

"Me own forgetfulness!"

"Never mind, grandma, I didn't care to read. It's just as well."

In a moment more the oddly-furnished room was flooded with light from a fine argand burner, and Clip seemed even prettier than by sunlight.

So pleasant, so brave, so patient, it was no wonder that the old woman's heart should go out to such a grandchild or no that.

And yet Clip had been sitting in the dark, or rather lying in it, broad awake, for a long time, and she had been oppressed by a terrible feeling of loneliness.

The sounds from without came in through the open window to tell her of people who were not crippled, and could come and go at all hours, and more than once she had wondered why no one of them ever happened to wander up the narrow stairs and into her lonely room.

"Only one person," she said to herself. "As good as the doctor or as Father Moriarty, or as good as Grandma Bounce."

All three were "good" in Clip's pure eyes, but cynical people might have raised the question whether the eminent surgeon or the parish priest would have been contented with the precise moral shelf on which they would have put away the "goodness" of Mrs. Bounce.

Perhaps not. And yet neither of them could have uttered a word against what she was in the habit of calling her "character."

She had plenty of it, indeed, for had she not kept an honest and very successful apple-stand, on that very corner, for many a long year, with the best of apples, the most excellent candies, the most honest peanuts, and the most quiet and well-behaved bananas!

So she had, indeed, and she had never once "failed," while there was not a dozen signs along the great business streets around her which had not been put up in the place of failures of one sort and another. Not all of them very good sorts, either.

It was very much more pleasant for Clip, now she had light around her and a book in her hand; but the mocking-bird merely stirred a little uneasily on his perch, and did not utter a sound. No late hours and gaslight for a bird of his correct and regular habits.

Mrs. Bounce was not much of a talker, nor was she, ordinarily, much of a reader, but on this particular evening, she seemed especially interested in the evening newspapers. Not merely in any one of them, for she had bought them all, and in one after another she fairly feasted over all they had to say concerning the failure of Vance & Madderley.

They made it very plain, too. They left small hope to the creditors. But Mrs. Bounce never let her lips betray her secret until she came upon one item.

"Howly Vargin!" she suddenly exclaimed. "Wudn't I loike to choke them 'porters!"

"What is it, grandma?"

"Nothin', honey, ownly it's a wicked worruld for a lone woman. Go on wid yer book."

It may be Clip was not unaccustomed to her grandmother's ways and outbreaks, for she did as she was bidden, and Mother Bounce grew once and again fiery red in the face over the following item:

"The failure is said to have carried down quite a

number of minor operators, the saddest of all, and perhaps the funniest, being an old lady who keeps an apple-stand in the vicinity. It is to be hoped that she will hereafter be satisfied to corner peanuts and leave the stock-market to her customers.

"Think of that," she growled to herself. "To lose me fortin, and thin to be made fun of by thim spalpanes of printers. Wudn't I loike to pison their paynuts for 'em, the day!"

She was not at all aware that the fun made of herself was as nothing to the critical and humorous remarks to which the members of the broken firm, and even their clerks and office-boys, had been compelled to submit.

The "Street" is too thoroughly case-hardened to mere financial disasters to draw a very serious face over any particular one, and is only too ready to see the smallest glimmer of a joke.

Somewhat slowly, and with now and then what sounded like an angry gasp, Mrs. Bounce recovered her temper, and at last she even laid aside her newspapers, except the one which contained the ugly paragraph.

"Clip might ask to rade 'em," she thought, "and I'd not loike her to put her eyes on that same."

But Clip was deep in something that seemed to interest her, and scarcely looked up until her grandmother said:

"Now, darlin', it's tired I am. Yez can put the light out while ye plaze. I'm goin'."

"Good-night, then, grandma, dear. I think I shall go to sleep by-and-by."

"The saints be wid ye, chile. But it's little they'd listen to an old woman loike me when they had yer own purty face fornisht thim."

"Now, grandma!"

But the old woman kissed her with something very like solemnity as she bade her good-night and marched away.

Mrs. Bounce's own room, for reasons best known to herself, was on the other side of the entryway, and Clip had never yet seen the inside of it. She knew it was there, however, and that a pull at the little bell-cord, which hung near her, had many a time been answered by the prompt appearance of her withered but very affectionate old guardian.

She was not likely to need her that night, which was just as well, considering.

Mrs. Bounce went across the entry, indeed, and closed the door behind her, with noise enough to reach the ears of Clip, but she did not linger long among the shadows of that apartment.

She did not even strike a light to dispel those shadows, curious as some of them evidently were. She only waited, standing near the door, as if she had a job of hard thinking on hand.

The room was as large as Clip's, but it had ten times as much furniture in it. At least of what looked like furniture in the dim light which struggled in through the curtainless windows. A bed there was, to be sure, for even old women like Mother Bounce must sleep sometimes; but narrow as was that couch it seemed in a manner cramped and crowded by the company it was in.

Could the old applewoman be intending to give up her stand and set up for a dealer in second-hand household goods?

If so, she had quite enough there to make a fair start with, although no ordinary eyes could just then have formed a sound opinion as to its quality and condition.

Mrs. Bounce, however, was not thinking of the contents of her sleeping-apartment.

In about five minutes she laid her bony hand on the knob of the door, and then the shadows themselves scarcely made less noise than she did as she slipped down the stairs to the street.

She had thrown a thin shawl over her shoulders before leaving Clip's room, and under this she now carried with her a square-cornered parcel of some sort, carefully wrapped in a newspaper.

Not even the policeman at the corner dreamed of asking Mrs. Bounce impertinent questions as to the nature of her business or her baggage.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE boys had handled their boat with a very fair degree of skill during the process of picking up their unexpected passenger, but he had helped himself pretty vigorously in the matter of climbing in. He had, indeed, succeeded in giving both Sile and Vandy a pretty good spattering, from which Phil Hawkins, at the stern, managed to escape.

He seemed by no means to have suffered any harm from his sudden bath. On the contrary, as Vandy plied the oars he appeared to be rapidly recovering from the effects of what he had swallowed before tumbling into the river. That had not been water, or he would probably not have left the ferryboat in so very peculiar a way. Water will drown people, as all men know, but those who are wise enough not to drink anything stronger are likely to be safer passengers on any sort of steamer.

Slowly and carefully the stranger looked from one to another of the three young boatmen, and he found each one of them looking just as curiously at him.

Vandy had just given Phil Hawkins a sort of cautioning kick, when their prize began with:

"Now, boys, I'm eternally obliged to you; I am, indeed. You were on hand exactly at the right time. My name's Robinson——"

"Is it, Mr. Vance?" remarked Vandy. "Now, do you know, I'm glad to hear that!"

"Vance! You know me, then, I declare! How's that? But you needn't let anybody else know, need you? I'll pay any sort of shot if you'll keep quiet. Besides the reward that's due for picking me up."

"We can keep still, I guess, without being paid for it," said Vandy MacNamara. "How is that, I'll Hawkins?"

"Mr. Vance means all right," said Phil, a trifle haughtily. "We are all gentlemen, Mr. Vance. Vandy can speak for himself. Mr. Morgan and I are from Pomeroy & Co.'s. Our house doesn't deal in drowning men. But we're very glad to have been of any assistance."

"Pomeroy & Co., I declare! Beg your pardon, young gentlemen. You can understand how very unpleasant it would be for me to have such a thing as this get into the papers, especially at a time like this. Don't want people to think I've lost my head, you know."

And yet he had lost it, very plainly, or he would have remained on the ferryboat.

Sile Morgan joined his friends in a very hearty promise of secrecy, and the mind of Mr. Vance seemed to be a good deal relieved. His next attention was as to how he should get home unnoticed, and how, after getting there, he should be able to account for his wet clothes.

While he was discussing that question with himself rather than with any one else, the boat was pulled suddenly into what seemed a particularly dark shadow, and Sile looked up to see the huge, black sides of an ocean-going steamship lying at anchor, and to all appearances "fast asleep."

There were lanterns forward and aft, and there may have been the sharpest kind of an outlook kept, but there were no visible signs of it.

"Right here run her down and sink her," remarked Vandy, "and nobody been the wiser."

"Well, we didn't," said Phil. "Hullo, see that boat!"

They were slipping past the steamer as he spoke, and the boat he called their attention to was doing the same from the other side of the hull. They had not noticed any as they came along, and the same thought came naturally to each of them.

"That boat has been to the ship on an errand."

Well, boats do that sort of thing continually, only it is not usual for yawls, with two men only in them, to be prowling after dark around vessels just arrived.

If they come, and are seen by the watch, they are apt to be ordered off, and if the harbor police get a sight of them they are pretty sure to be followed and overhauled.

There were two men in that boat, and there was also a sort of tarpaulin that looked as if it had been spread to cover something. Tarpaulins are used for that in rainy weather, but what was the need of one on such a very pleasant evening?

"Steer closer to 'em," whispered Vandy to Phil, "but don't speak."

Phil gave the boat a sheer, but the other craft did not allow him to make much of it. He and his friends made out, especially Vandy, to get a pretty good look at their neighbors, but the latter, as Vandy said, "had the best on him," for they shoved their oars into the water with a strength and skill which left him far astern in less than half a minute.

"Don't want to be looked at, I should say," remarked Mr. Vance.

"They're after no good," said Vandy; "but we don't belong to the harbor police. If we did we couldn't catch 'em."

"I should say not. Fellows of that kind know how to pull a boat. Tell you what I wish you'd do."

"What's that?"

"Land me on the Brooklyn side, so I can walk home and not show myself on another ferryboat."

"All right; we will."

"I know it's a pretty good pull, but if ever I can do one of you a favor you can call on me."

"We don't want any kind of pay. Tell you what, we wouldn't have missed it. Kind of a grand lark, you know."

"Never thought of that," said Mr. Vance. "So I get myself half drowned for the sake of giving three boys a lark."

There was something decidedly funny in the doleful manner of his remarks, but he did not mean to be funny. In fact, he was very wet and wretched, and his young friends were sincerely sorry for him. It is like enough, however, that there were those among Vance & Maddeley's creditors, not to mention Mother Bounce herself, who would have been more than half inclined to enjoy the unpleasant predicament of the ruined speculator. He had gotten himself into cold water, and not so very cold, while his failure had put him in hot water, some of them in "water" that was very hot, indeed.

He was not thinking of his creditors, just then, however, and he seemed particularly well pleased when he was able to climb out on a Brooklyn pier and strike away through the quietest streets he could find, toward his own home.

"If he's got a wife," said Phil, "and I believe he has, I wonder what sort of a yarn he'll tell her?"

"Best tell her the truth," said Sile.

"Of course. But that sort of a man doesn't always have it. They're always late."

"Haven't we been out about long enough?" said Vandy, as the nose of the boat was turned toward the New York shore.

"I should say we had," replied Phil. "Hullo! what's this?"

"Boat ahoy!" shouted a rough voice near them.

"Pull up."

"Pull up what?" asked Vandy, as he lay on his oars, and a long, sharp, nicely molded craft, rowed by six oars, came sweeping alongside them.

"No nonsense. What are you up to?"

"Most anything," said Vandy, adding, to his companions: "Boys, it's the harbor police. We mustn't be rough on 'em."

"Shut up, youngster. Who are you?"

The sergeant in command of that squad was no greenhorn, and he understood the character of the youngsters at a glance; but their being out in that way was an unusual sort of thing, and he made them answer several sharp questions before he said:

"Well, you're all right."

"We'll let you go, then, this time," said Vandy, "but you mustn't do so any more."

"You've cheek enough to sink a boat of that size. Better go home. You ain't safe."

"Where do the police get the brass for their buttons?" retorted Vandy.

"You don't breed any."

It was all good-natured enough, but it looked as if the sergeant was really "after somebody," from the speed with which the swift and finely handled boat under him shot away down-stream with the tide.

"The harbor'd be as safe as Broadway if there were plenty of those fellows," said Vandy.

"Well, isn't it?" asked Sile.

"Not exactly. That is, it's safe enough, so far as boats like ours are concerned, but the river-thieves are at work all the while."

"What do they find to steal?"

"Anything the ships bring in. They'd steal the ships themselves, a piece at a time. Any number of the sailors work with 'em."

"What! the sailors themselves?"

"Yes; they're a hard lot. Come from everywhere."

"But what can they do with what they get? They can't sell things without being caught."

"Can't they, though? That's the difficulty. It's the men they sell to that keep the thing going. Sometimes they actually strip a ship's cabin. Then they slip along the docks and steal things that lie on the piers."

"Why, they're a sort of pirates."

"Just what they are. Only's what they would be if it wasn't for the cops on land and the river squad on the water."

Sile was learning a good many things for a boy who had only arrived from the country.

By the time the boys had returned their boat to its owner and made their way back to Otter Street, they all felt as if they had seen quite enough for one evening. It had been full of adventures of one sort and another, and even Vandy was compelled to admit that it was a little out of the common.

"Fact, boys," he confessed, before he bade them good-night, "when we started I wasn't half sure I could show you a drowning broker, and some river-thieves and the police."

And then he added, to himself:

"But I hadn't any idea of seeing old Mother Bounce down there, either."

[To be continued.]

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Through the Heart of Japan.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK,

Author of "Keep your Bowers," "Inventive Boy," "Orville and Dan," "The Chums at Harvard College," Etc.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TOUGH UNDERTAKING.

NAKA-YAMA saluted the party, and after ordering his servants to procure refreshments for them, said, as he took his seat among his guests:

"I have been favored with much concerning you from my cousin, and read of your adventures in the newspapers, that I was anxious to make your acquaintance. Everything I know about porcelain I shall be most happy to impart to you."

"We are greatly obliged," answered Orville. "Our object in visiting Dai Nihon is to acquire an insight into your manufactures. We believe the United States will become your greatest customers, and hope that you in return will purchase largely of us."

"Are you engaged in commerce?" politely inquired Naka-yama.

"No," said Dan; "we have only this year quitted college. An American always has his eyes open to a possible trade in anything, and we intend in this journey combining business with pleasure."

"That is a novel idea," remarked their host. "Though, after all, it is the correct one."

When they had partaken of tea, and some of the party had smoked a pipe or two, Naka-yama led the way into his storehouse, and ushering them into a side-room, said:

"This is my museum. In it you will find pottery dating from the time of Ooseï-tsumi, who lived twenty-five hundred years ago."

"You're joking, are you not?" inquired Johnnie.

"No," answered Naka-yama; "I am in earnest." With which he took a rudely-fashioned clay bowl from its shelf, and said: "This was dug out of a tomb near Kirishama, in the province of Huiga."

"The spot where the gods descended to earth," smilingly observed Dan. "We intend to visit that place."

Their host laughed, and said:

"Yes-so; the story runs: 'This rough piece of clay was fashioned by hands that have been still for twenty-five centuries.' We Nihonese revere such relics not with blind worship, as the ignorant do idols, but as legacies of those who have lived and worked before us. Ooseï-tsumi, the inventor of pottery, is by us regarded as a personage worthy of perpetual respect. Every year, at the Festival of the Potters, we decorate his image with green boughs, and burn incense to his spirit."

"Do you think the spirits have any share in such a ceremony?" inquired Don Mortimer.

Naka-yama's eyes rolled, his mouth twitched comically, and he quietly replied:

"As I have never been a spirit, I cannot say. Do not imagine we are foolish enough to think his ghost is present when we perform the ceremony of which I have alluded. We do it to keep alive the memory of the man who, by his ingenuity, bequeathed to us something better than vessels formed by hollowing stones or wood. We have given him the divine appellation of Kami, and show our gratitude by remembering his name."

"That is immortality," said Dan. "I now understand why you have so many gods. You thus name all those who have benefited your country. You Japanese worship where we Americans admire."

"Yes," nodded Naka-yama. "It says in the 'Kojiki':

"'In honoring good men
Who have lived for us,
We show one of the noblest traits of human nature—
Gratitude.
Surely a person who is ungrateful
To those who have sacrificed
Their happiness for his good
Is worse than the *Eizo*.'" (Savages.)

"I think you are right," quietly answered Orville. "However, as a rule, all men are ungrateful."

"Not my countrymen," said Kura. "We pride ourselves upon remembering both our friends and our enemies."

"Yes. So we are learning," chuckled Johnnie; "but how about this pottery? We have only got as far as the original Jacobs who invented it. Who improved upon this rough stuff, and taught you how to make Satsuma ware?"

Naka-yama smiled at this practical speech, and said:

"Twenty-four hundred years ago, one Hiko-no-mikoto, who lived in Yamato, was ordered by the Mikado Jimmu to manufacture various kinds of pottery to be used in the temples; there is a specimen," pointing to a large unglazed vessel. "In your year six hundred and sixty-five, a Corean tilemaker landed in Nihon, and taught our ancestors how to make tiles with which to roof the temples. A hundred years after that a house, named Giyoki, invented, or what is more probable, introduced from China, the potter's wheel. Five hundred years after that a man named Kato made a voyage to China and learned how to make stone-ware. This," picking up a heavy bowl, "was manufactured by him or one of his pupils."

"I understand," remarked Dan. "You Nihonese have always been ready to learn from outside nations."

"Yes, anything that is good and useful," answered their host. "We do not, like the Chinese, desire to travel sideways. In your sixteenth century a Corean came to Kyoto and taught us how to make this black pottery," exhibiting a bowl marked in golden characters, *raku* (enjoyment). "Then we sent men to China to study the art of porcelain-making, and they improved on what they learned. After our great invasion of the Corea, one of our generals, Shimadzu Yoshi-hisa, Prince of Satsuma, brought back with him as slaves a number of porcelain-makers, with their families, whom he settled in Kagoshima. There, under the fostering care of generations of Satsuma's princes, they, after many years of labor, succeeded in making that cream-color beautiful ware, which my people now manufacture, and which your countrymen buy with such readiness. Up to a few years ago the workmen were confined to the province of Satsuma. Now they are to be found all over Japan, wherever they can procure suitable material for their ware. I have ten families settled here, and soon my own people will be able to make better porcelain than their teachers."

"That is like all you Japanese," remarked Orville. "You are a wonderful nation and will some day astonish the world!"

"I think you have already done so!" said Dan.

Benkei, Nami, Kura and Naka-yama bowed low, and the first-named replied:

"Thank you, chums! You Americans have done more for us than any other nation. A quarter of a century ago, your Commodore Perry knocked at the doors of Nihon and demanded that we should receive you as our brothers. Since that time we have been the pupils and you the teachers. We think more of the people of the United States than of any other nation, because they have not attempted to bully us like England, Germany and France. We admire the power of those countries, but——"

"Yes, I know what you would say!" cried Johnnie. "You think England puts on too many frills in the East and treats you like a baby nation—just as she did the States—and you're right, chum! Wait until your army and navy are stronger, and she and other European nations will change their arrogant style and treat you as they do us!"

"Bravo, Professor Brackett!" cried Dan. "We had no idea you could talk so sensibly!"

"Oh, I'm not always playing tricks!" said the wag. "Come, Mr. Naka-yama, show us round your works!"

Naka led the way out of the building, and they presently found themselves among the potters.

Each workman operated at home, or, rather, in a little shed close to his dwelling.

Their only apparatus was the ordinary potter's wheel, such as is used all over the world.

Usually, all the members of a family were employed in the work. The visitors entered a yard and watched a group thus busied.

The mother, with a child fastened on her back, made up the clay; a big, bulking son beat it until it was tempered and fit for working.

The father, or thrower, as he was termed, formed the ware on the wheel.

A second son carried the wet articles to the shelves and tended the drying.

A tall girl, the eldest daughter, trimmed the dried vessels, and a younger sister made the spouts and handles, which were put on by the father.

The remainder of the family acted as attendants to the others, and all were as busy as bees.

The males were stripped to the waist, and the females very lightly clad, both sexes being smothered with clay, which gave them a gray, dusty look.

"They begin work at sunrise," said Naka, "and keep at it until the hour of the Hare (6 to 8 A.M.), then they rest for a space and eat, after which they recommence, and keep at it until the hour of the Horse (noon to 2 P.M.). Then comes the second rice and a smoke, at the conclusion of which they resume labor and work steadily until sunset, when they eat third rice and go to bed."

"And the children?" asked Orville. "I thought they all went to school?"

"Yes, they do," said Naka. "They go every other day, until they can read, write and calculate, after which their education is supposed to be complete. We do not, like you Americans, teach our laborers the abstruse sciences, such as algebra, astronomy and chemistry."

"Everybody has an equal chance in our country," said Dan.

"Yes," said Brackett; "all our boys have an idea of some day filling the Presidential chair. Come, Mr. Naka-yama, after these yellow articles are made how are they glazed and decorated?"

The porcelain-dealer led the way toward a range of little hills, the sides of which were covered with kilns, built in groups of three, one behind the other.

The workmen first fill the upper one with ware and fire it, then serve the next kiln in the same way, and then the lower one. The flame and heat rush through holes between the kilns and produce a whirling flame, which quickly converts the clay articles into porcelain.

The fuel used is barked cord-wood, which has previously been dried in an oven.

The chums saw a kiln filled and fired, also one opened and emptied of its contents.

The latter was accomplished while the articles were quite hot, though, the outside of the kiln being cool, the visitors did not understand this.

As the various articles were passed out, by almost naked firemen, carriers seized the pieces with their bare hands and started for an adjoining shed, yelling: "*Hi-no-hirio!*" (Look out! look out!)

The effect was very comical, the men screwing up their features and carrying the pieces very tenderly, being anxious not only to get rid of them as quickly as possible, but to bear them safely.

"They make a confounded noise over nothing, don't they?" remarked Brackett to Nami, who was dying to play somebody a trick. "One would think it was hard work moving those light vases and pots."

"You couldn't carry the smallest one of them a dozen yards," chuckled the artist.

"Bet you I could," cried Johnnie. "I'll carry that big vase to the shed, or I'll eat it."

"I'll bet you a bag of rice—to be given to the fireman on the largest family—that you can't even lift the article."

"Done!" said Brack, advancing to the kiln.

"Stop!" shouted Nami. "It's hot—hot—hot!"

"What?" ejaculated Brackett.

"Hot, my friend," repeated Nami. "Come, you are sold again! I hand over your yen."

"Pony up, chum!" cried Orv.

"Yes, pay over," laughingly remarked Dan.

"Nami has got the best of you," said Benkei.

"You're no match for him, Johnnie."

"I ought to have been smarter," quietly observed Don Mortimer.

"My friend," said their host, who had listened with polite amazement, "yonder vase is still sufficiently warm to burn any but a seasoned person's hands. The skin of the fireman's fingers is as hard as horn, and constant practice has enabled them to handle the heated pottery. I beg you will not attempt to touch that piece of porcelain."

"Yes, do not try to perform such a foolish act," whispered Kura. "Master, you deem *hara-kiri* an absurdity. To do such a thing as try to handle that vase would be even more foolish."

Johnnie glanced first at his companions and next at the row of grinning bearers and workmen, who had paused in order to listen to the conversation, then said, in a quiet, confident tone:

"If you think you can scare me, you're confoundedly mistaken. Boys, I'm going to carry that vase!"

CHAPTER XXII.

IN WHICH BENKEI GAINS A VICTORY.

JOHNNIE felt that his honor was at stake. He had vowed to carry the hot vase to the glazing-shed, and was bound to do it.

"Will you kindly lend me two of those small bags?" he asked of their host. "Those coarse cotton ones."

As he spoke he pointed to a pile of miniature sacks, used in the business. When the articles had been given him he inserted his hands in them and requested Kura to fill the empty spaces between his flesh and the material with earth.

"Why do you do that?" demanded his chums.

"Never you mind," he replied. "Just keep your eyes open and you'll learn."

After Kura had almost filled the bags, in which Johnnie still kept his hands, he tied the mouths tightly about Brackett's wrists.

Johnnie then looked as though he were wearing boxing-gloves.

"Now for it!" he cried, as he advanced toward the furnace. "This dry earth will act as a non-conductor, and will not give out any steam to scald my hands."

"*Hurra, hurra!*" excitedly exclaimed the workmen.

The native cry of acclamation, or cheer, is very much like the English "hurrah," the only difference being that it is given more quickly—*i. e.*, pronounced as we do "hurry." When Brackett heard them he paused, smiled and said:

"Yes, you may hurrah, boys! Mr. Nami is going to pay for the bag of rice, sure!"

He had not calculated the heat of the kiln, which was still at a high temperature.

As he was about to enter it, for the purpose of performing his promise, he felt the hot air dry his skin, and he for a moment hesitated.

"Master," said Kura, advancing with a thick coat made of felt, used by the firemen when ascertaining how the contents of the kiln are being fired, "slip this on over your clothes! It will protect your body!"

Brackett did as his pupil suggested, then, by the advice of the artist, Nami, tied a dry towel loosely about his mouth, entered the opening in the kiln, and, grasping the crated vase with his bag-incased hands, came forth, shouting:

"*Hi-no, hi-no!*" (Look out.) "*Hurra, hurra!*"

His courage and wit delighted the Japanese workmen as much as it did his friends, and everybody vociferously cheered him.

Nami produced his money-bag and gave the foreman of the people a yen.

"Let us each add a dollar to that," said Johnnie. "We have kept the men from their work and ought to pay for it."

"Mr. Brackett," observed their host, as they paid in their subscriptions, "that vase shall be glazed and presented to you."

"And I will decorate it!" said Nami, who was tickled with Johnnie's cuteness. "I'll represent you in the act of carrying the vase, and your chums, myself and the workmen watching you."

"I shall then doubly value it as a souvenir of my visit," modestly replied the wag. "You can label it, 'Didn't get the best of him that time,' and sign it 'Your brother-joker, Nami.'"

"I will," nodded the artist.

After Nami had made a rough sketch, by which to work on the vase, he followed the party to the glazing-shed, where the porcelain was dipped into the lead fluid.

"It now has to be baked a second time, by what we term a glost-fireman," said Naka-yama. "It will then be a plain glazed, yellow Satsuma vase. When my cousin has ornamented it with a picture of your act, I shall send it to a muffle or enamel-fireman, who will finish it with fine craquele enamel."

"How do you produce that cracked or cracked, netlike surface on your pottery?" asked Orville. "It has always puzzled my countrymen."

"It is done in several ways," said their guide. "It depends partly upon the baking, partly upon the thickness of the final glaze and of the white (lead) coating underneath, and partly upon the way in which the article is cooled. One thing is certain, with all their ability, Americans and Europeans have never been able to make craquele porcelain!"

"No," sighed Johnnie, pretending to be sadly affected—"alas! my poor country, you cannot produce crazy pottery!" Then, winking at Naka-yama, merrily added, "but we invented the steam-engine, electric-telegraph, telephone and sawing-machine, so there's some hope for us."

"Yours is a great nation!" said the porcelain-dealer, bowing. "It is a small thing to cover a bowl with tiny cracks—we salute you as our teachers! Come, I will introduce you to my decorators of Satsuma ware."

He led the way to a district some distance from the potteries, where, in small, neat houses, each provided with a broad veranda, they beheld artists painting figures, flowers and other designs on the glazed, yellow porcelain. Some pieces were elaborately decorated, others just touched with the pencil.

The porcelain embellishers were surrounded by their pupils and children, and seemed a higher class than the potters.

"Until the ware reaches this stage, one piece is of very little more value than another," said Naka-yama. "Of course, I do not refer to sizes and shapes, which increase the worth. What I mean is this: the decoration stamps the chief value of our articles. An artist takes a plain vase, costing five thousand cash (fifty cents), and by his art renders it so beautiful that it is worth ten times that money, and sells in America for a hundred times as much as I get for it from the Yokohama merchants. Now, come back and see the final process of porcelain-making."

They returned to the pottery district, and after watching the enamel-firemen dip the painted vases, and seeing some of the beautiful, glossy, cream-colored ware taken from a cooled muffle (furnace in which the finished porcelain is subjected to an intense heat), the party re-entered Naka-yama's house and ate their midday meal.

"Is there much of your ware sent to America?" inquired Dan of their host.

"About a hundred thousand dollars worth yearly," said Naka. "We shall be able to make ten times as much when we have American machinery."

"Yet men like that old quartz-pounder rave about us beasts of invaders," cried Johnnie. "It seems to me the United States and Japan ought to give and take. You give us your ware and take our machines in exchange. After this, whenever I see a piece of Japanese pottery, I shall think of that old fellow shouting, 'Go back home. We do not want you in Nihon!'"

"He was like myself," said Kura. "I once thought Americans were savages; now I consider them my brothers."

"Your *cure* is complete, Kura," patronizingly remarked Benkei. "Now you understand the true spirit of Old Japan—to accept what is of the greatest benefit to your country."

"Yes," said Orville; "you must thoroughly Americanize yourselves."

"Then I may drink a little whisky," slyly observed the late *ronin*. "I have been told that the first thing an American does after he settles in Yokohama is to join a club where he can secretly obtain all the liquor he desires."

Johnnie chuckled at his pupil's words, and Orville, after subduing a desire to do the same, said, in a grave tone:

"It appears to me, Mr. Kura-no-suke, that you have a good eye for the weaknesses of my countrymen."

Kura smiled comically as he, with a profound gesture of respect, replied:

"Mr. Pillamore, I apologize. I have unfortunately, in adopting your dress, fallen into the same error as have many of my countrymen. I regret having offended you."

"What do you mean, Kura?" demanded Benkei, who did not like the *ex-ronin* to speak so freely. "You presume upon my friend's kindness."

Now Kura was, spite of the strange situation under which he had been placed when he met the chums, a gentleman, and as such was growing tired of being what he termed "preached at" by Benkei, so he politely retorted: "Sir Benkei Yuso, I am not a baby, to be rubbed on the head (as we pat a child). When my teacher, the noble Sama Brackett, converted me to his way of thinking, he represented that foreigners despise exhilarating beverages. I, of course, knew he referred to the better class of his countrymen, and was willing to renounce my *saké*-cup, but this morning I have discovered that you did not do so, all in a hurry, therefore fail to see why I should. You have only lately become a total abstainer."

"What do you mean?" demanded Ben, who was intensely indignant at his countryman's speech. "Your *Samurai* disease is breaking out again."

"Please do not quarrel," said Naka-yama, nervously fluttering his fan.

"Oh, I am not quarreling!" exclaimed Benkei.

"Nor I," snapped Kura. "I am willing enough to do anything you have done, Sir Benkei, but don't see why I should be called upon to all at once sacrifice my *saké*!"

"My friends," said Orville, "as the head of this expedition I must claim the right to adjust your quarrel."

"Oh, I'd scorn to bandy words with an ex-*ronin*!" loftily observed Benkei, rising and regarding Kura contemptuously. "I am a *so-nin*!"

"And I would consider myself disgraced in quarreling with an ex-*boshi*!" said Kura, with his nose in the air. "My ancestors were *Hatamoto* (esquires), yours only *akindo*!" (Shopkeepers.)

"Stop, stop!" said Orv. "Chum—Benkei—you, who know so much more than your good countryman, must not be angry at his ignorance!"

"And you, Kura, must not insult your superior!" remarked Nami.

"It appears to me that there is some trouble between you," said Dan, who had hereto merely been a listener. "Come, Kura, say what you mean, when, doubtless, our much-esteemed brother, Sir Benkei Yuso, will be able to explain matters. Remember one thing, he has seen the world, learned as much as either of us. Knowing this, you cannot expect to rank with him in our estimation."

"Oh, Sama," somewhat tartly answered Kura, bowing respectfully, "I am painfully aware I am, in your estimation, the inferior of the illustrious Benkei Yuso, *so-nin*; still, I have not quite forgotten my old pride! What angers me is this: You permitted him to have a good time long after you knew him, while I (warmly) am compelled to go about with my nose smelling the good *saké*, my mouth watering and my stomach quivering for a drink! You made what we call rice of him and bitter acorn-cake of me."

"You are mistaken, Kura!" sternly answered Orville. "Sir Benkei Yuso renounced *saké* soon after adopting our style of garments. He saw that it disgraced those who indulged in it, so gave up its use."

"*Sa-kashi matte*." (Stop a moment) murmured the *ex-ronin*, fumbling in his pocket. "Permit me to respectfully enlighten you as to his little games."

In another moment he produced a copy of the Boston Illustrated paper containing the dreadful portrait of Benkei.

On seeing this the doctor grew pale with mortification.

"Where did you get that?" he demanded, in a low, suppressed tone.

"From my tutor," triumphantly answered Kura. "It is meant for your portrait, eh?"

Brackett felt bad, he having, by way of a joke, loaned the paper to Kura.

For some moments no one spoke.

They were sorry that Johnnie had, by his thoughtlessness, caused mortification to such a noble fellow as Benkei.

The latter walked toward a small room used as a study by Naka-yama.

Suspended from the wall of this apartment was a scroll, inscribed with a saying of the sage, Confucius:

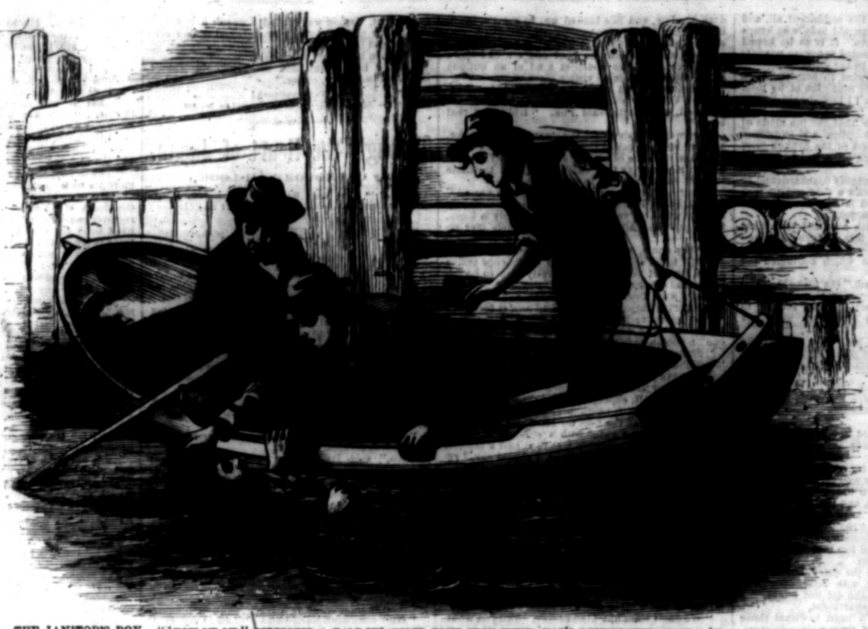
"Make out of evil something that is good."

Ben read this, and after thinking for a while, during which all but Kura felt the greatest sympathy for him, he conquered his anger, and returning to the party, took the tell-tale paper from the *ex-ronin*'s hand, then, in a quiet, manly fashion, related the affair.

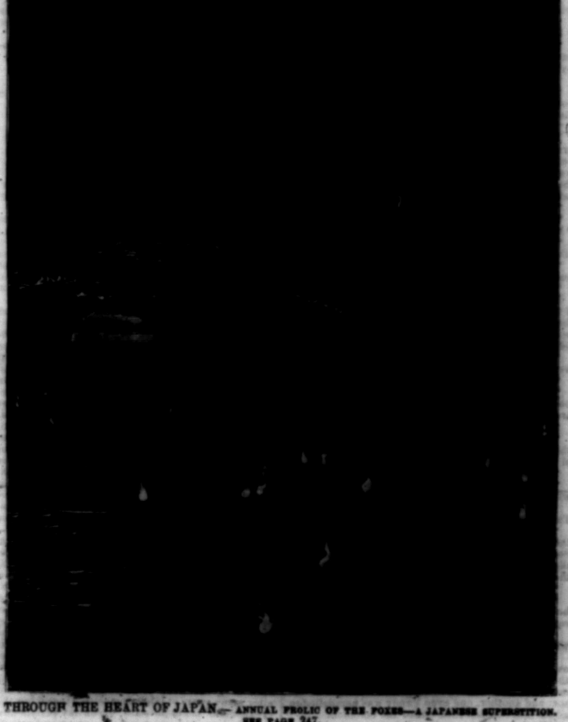
As he progressed, Kura grew shamefaced, and when Benkei ended his narrative, his late accuser threw himself upon his hands and knees, and after performing the Respectful Ceremony, said:

"Sir Benkei Yuso, I humbly ask your pardon. I feel like the Satsuma man who insulted my glorious ancestor, Oishi Kura-no-suke. Will you forgive me? I here vow to for ever abstain from *saké*!"

"Rise, my friend," said Benkei. "I had this pic-



THE JANITOR'S BOY.—"'YOW-OW-OW!' SCREECHED A HALF-STRANGLED VOICE FROM UNDER HER'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND. 'TAKE HOLD OF MY (HIC) COAT-COLLAR. WHAT'S THE (HIC) USE OF PULLING MY (HIC) HAIR OUT?'"—SEE PAGE 246.



THROUGH THE HEART OF JAPAN.—ANNUAL FROLIC OF THE FOXES.—A JAPANESE SUPERSTITION. SEE PAGE 247.

ture taken in order that it should not as a reminder not only to me, but to my countrymen. When my body was deluged with drink I was a beast. By shearing you this, my chum Brackett has rendered us both a service;" adding, as he turned and offered his hand to the really ashamed joker, "Johnnie, why do you look so sorry?"

"Because, in desiring to have a lark at our expense, I mortified you," said Brackett. "Bee, old chum, I'll never serve you another trick as long as I live!"

Benkei smiled and said: "What, never?"

"Confound that Pinafore!" chuckled Brackett. "No, never!"

Mutual congratulations followed, and they spent a most pleasant afternoon and evening with their host and his family.

As they parted with Nami in the thoroughfare called Koji Machi (Yeast Street), the painter remarked:

"To-morrow I will take you to visit the silk-weavers and dyers."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ORIGINAL RIP VAN WINKLE.

THE next morning, as the chums were making their toilets, Kura came into the bath-room, shivering and crying:

"*Samuee! samuee!*" (Cold! cold!) "Do you not know this is the day of the *Peh-loo*?" (White dew.)

"I think it's nice, wholesome weather," said Dan.

"don't you, Ben?"

"I do," said the doctor, nodding. "I believe, had Kura not looked at the calendar, he would not think the air cold."

"I can always feel the eight joints of the yearly bamboo," observed Kura, rubbing his hands. "I never have to consult a calendar for that."

"What in the name of common sense do you mean by the eight joints of the yearly bamboo?" demanded Johnnie, with a grin.

Kura produced a thin tract, the cover of which was decorated with a gorgeous representation of the rain-dragon, then said:

"This is our calendar for the year two thousand five hundred and thirty-eight."

"What is the good of that?" asked Brackett. "We shall all be dead and turned into vegetables long before the year two thousand, to say nothing of the odd five hundred and thirty-eight years."

"I spoke of this year," said Kura. "We date further back than you do. Perhaps Sir Benkei Yuzo, who knows all about these things, will explain how our calendar-makers can predict the annual changes?"

"Certainly," answered Ben. "Come into the reception-room where the floor is not so sloppy, and I will show you the divisions of a Japanese year."

When they were squatted about him on the *tokonoma*, he produced a sheet of paper and drew the following diagram:

	Chuk (Joints.)	*Khe (Breath.)*
Spring 1.	First breath of Spring	1 Feb. 3d.
	Rain water	2 Feb. 19th.
	Insects aroused	3 Mar. 5th.
2.	Middle of Spring	4 Mar. 20th.
	Clear weather	5 April 5th.
	Seed rain	6 April 20th.
Summer 3.	First breath of Summer	7 May 5th.
	Seed begins to fill	8 May 20th.
	Transplant rice	9 June 6th.
4.	Height of Summer	10 June 21st.
	Little heat	11 July 6th.
	Excessive heat	12 July 23d.
Autumn 5.	First breath of Autumn	13 Aug. 7th.
	Heat ceases	14 Aug. 23d.
	White dew	15 Sept. 8th.
6.	Middle of Autumn	16 Sept. 23d.
	Cold dew	17 Oct. 8th.
	Hoar frost	18 Oct. 23d.
Winter 7.	First breath of Winter	19 Nov. 7th.
	Little snow	20 Nov. 22d.
	Great snow	21 Dec. 7th.
8.	Height of Winter	22 Dec. 22d.
	Little frost	23 Jan. 6th.
	Great frost	24 Jan. 20th.

"Now you will understand what Kura meant by the eight joints of the bamboo, or rather the Japanese year. Each joint, or *chuk*, has three breaths, or *Khe*. See," opening Kura's almanac, "to-day is the eighth of September. The Chinese character against it is *Peh-loo* (white dew), and the smaller Japanese one warns people that it is time to put on a warm coat. Our folks consult the calendar for all manner of things, such as lucky and unlucky days, and when to change their costume. Of course, as some of our years have thirteen months, these dates are changed with each publication, but, taking year with year, the joints and breaths occur pretty regularly on the days set down in the almanac."

"Have you Americans calendars by which you can foretell the weather?" inquired Kura.

"Oh, yes," was Johnnie's stilling reply; "but we don't term our year a bamboo. We take, say, this month and print the thirty days down a page, which also gives days of weeks, aspects, holidays and weather."

"Oh, I see!" exclaimed Kura. "You can thus tell each day beforehand?"

"Not by a big lot we can't, from the almanac," chuckled the wag. "The men who print such things are smart enough not to commit themselves to any particular days for change of weather. They straggle their predictions all down the thirty days, thus—Very sultry—cooler—dull—fair—cool. For warmer weather—very pleasant—with rain. This they insert, anyhow, on the page."

"How can people tell by that?" asked the exronin. "It is very indefinite! Our calendars say, for instance to-day, just what weather we are to have."

"Do the changes always come on those days?" inquired Orville. "Are they never a week earlier or later?"

Kura scratched his head and looked at Benkei, who merrily sang to the air in "Pinafore."

"No, never—that is, hardly ever! Hardly ever disappoint the ones who buy!"

"Sir Yuzo," solemnly observed Orville; "don't! If Kura becomes infected with 'Pinafore' we shall have no peace! Spare him!"

"What do you mean?" asked Kura. "Is 'Pinafore' an American disease?"

"Anglo-American," said Ben. "It originally came from England."

After Dan had described what it was to the ex-Samurai the latter remarked:

"I see, it is like candy, a little is good, but when you have it for breakfast, dinner and supper it becomes sickening! Of course, as you say:

> 'I might have been a Rooshian,
> A Chinese or a Prooshian;
> But it's greatly to my credit,
> Though I myself have said it,
> That I'm a Nihon man, and
> Hail from the land—the land—
> You call —— Japan?'"

"You've caught it, Kura!" sadly remarked Johnnie. "The Mikado will have to build lunatic asylums!"

Kura smiled, in a soft, significant manner, and said: "Yes, since you gentlemen from afar have enlightened us with your new sciences, a great many of my countrymen have gone out of their senses. Phrenology—Pinafore—they are all alike. Oh, I have dreamed all night about bumps, and now you've filled my head with Pinafore."

"Breakfast!" cried Don, from the next apartment. "Say, boys, if you don't hurry up we shall not be ready when Nami comes."

"Nami is here," said a voice in the hallway. "Have you not yet eaten?" As he spoke the artist-printer entered, and after saluting them, went on, laughingly: "You've done a nice thing for me, Brickett. My cousin's workmen have, out of gratitude for the rice you gave them, sent a lot of vases, et cetera, to my studio. With the porcelain came this letter," opening a long strip of thin *kodzu* paper, covered with manuscripts, which he translated as follows:

"You yesterday introduced to the firemen of Satsuma ware, in the eastern division of Tokio, several honorable strangers from afar, who, by their affability and kindness, showed they were true *Samurai* (gentlemen). To-day our children go about with over-distended stomachs, the latter filled with the bounty so generously given us by the *Sama*. Now, it would be churlish on our part, were we not to (by a present) return the kindness shown us. We therefore send:

"Item—One vase for the gentleman who carried the hot porcelain (Johnnie).

"Item—One vase for the head *Sama* (Orville).

"Item—One vase for the twin *Sama* (Dan).

"Item—One vase for the *Sama* who writes everything down (Don Mortimer).

"Item—One vase for Benkei Yuzo, *Sonin* (Esquire); also a pair of bowls for him.

"Item—A complimentary jar for *saké* for Kurasosuke; also a pair of small bowls.

"Item—Forty-eight small pieces of Satsuma ware for the *Samas*.

"We, the undersigned, humbly ask you to suitably decorate these articles for your friends, and we will glaze and finish the pieces for them. A respectful suggestion.

"Fifteenth year, Mutsuhito, ninth month.

"Signed—TANAKA YASUBUYE, Otokodate of porcelain firemen, and sixteen others."

"Of course you will not attempt such a labor?" said Orv, as Nami seated himself among them.

"Of course I *shall*," was his reply. "I have already painted three of the vases, and sent them off to the worthy men. You will have enough small specimens of Satsuma ware for your sisters and your cousins and your aunts."

The chums glanced significantly at one another, and sang, in chorus:

"He said: His sisters and his cousins and his aunts!" Then ceased, in a breath, "Pinafore?"

"What do you mean?" asked Nami. "Have I said anything out of the way?"

Orville explained the joke. On hearing which Nami observed:

"Do you call the idea of that play original?"

"Yes," said Dan; "B. M. S. Pinafore is actually a new thing. It was not copied from the French, as are most of our plays."

"It was stolen from us," quietly remarked Nami. "The story may be found in the ninety-second volume of the "Kojiki" (book of ancient traditions)! It is called the 'The child's garment'—pinafore."

"That is so!" cried Benkei; "the Americans have borrowed largely from our legends. Why, Boucicault's drama of "Rip Van Winkle" was taken, bodily, from the story of "Lu-wen," the pious woodcutter."

"He stole it from Washington Irving's story," said Dan. "Where did you get it?"

"We stole it from the Chinese," slyly answered Benkei. "The original story runs thus: In the golden period of China there dwelt on the sacred mountain of Tendai, the Fuji-yama of the Nan-lin range, a pious woodcutter named Lu-wen."

"Will the tale take very long to unfold?" inquired Johnnie. "Remember we are due at the silk-weaver's at the hour of the Dragon!"

"Don't interrupt the gentleman who has the floor!" said Orv. "Go on, Ben; let us hear about the Chinese Rip Van Winkle."

Benkei smiled and continued his narrative as follows:

"One day when Lu-wen, an ox shoulder, was climbing the mountain he lost his way. Finding he did not know where he was, he seated himself on a fallen tree and gazed upon the beautiful landscape and the flowers. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'I would like forever to remain thus!'

"As he spoke, a fox ran out of the thicket on his right, darted across the path, and vanished on his left.

"'I will have his skin,' said Lu-wen, 'when the Autumnal winds blow, and the *tu-seuh* (great snow) falls on this mountain of Tendai, a fox-skin is a good thing to possess.'

"Shouldering his ax, he started to run the fox to earth; after doing which, he would have dug it out and killed it.

"Lu-wen ran and ran until he arrived at a clear spot in the woods, where he beheld a sight that made his eyes stick out like those of a lobster, for he saw two beautiful ladies seated on the sward playing a game of *sho-gi* (chess).

"'Ah,' sighed the pious man, 'if one of them would only fall in love with me!'

"He little thought it was the fox and its wife, who had assumed human forms in order to trouble him.

"They played and Lu-wen watched—he neither heeding nor caring how the time flew.

"He did not speak to them until one of the ladies made a false move, when he said:

"'Oh, beautiful one in red, *kai-noe*' (you have blundered).

"As he spoke they changed into foxes and vanished into their hole.

"'Oh, oh!' he mumbled, for his voice had changed to that of an old man. 'I will dig you out; have two skins instead of one!'

"Saying this he began to move his ax; when, through sheer decay, it broke off at the head, the wood of the helve having become mere punk.

[For continuation, see next page.]



THE MYSTIC THREE.—"AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAR A HUGE BEAR REARED UP ON ITS HIND LEGS, AND SEEMED ABOUT TO SPRING UPON THEM." SEE PAGE 250.

Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

JOHN P. MENCHNER,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 21, M'KIBBIN STREET, BROOKLYN (E. D.), N. Y.

JOHN P. MENCHNER is another boy who has been singled out among his classmates for especial honor. By diligence from day to day, and by conduct which has been an example to those about him, he has made a record which will always appear to his honor in the records of his school, and which entitles him to a place in this column, in which the actual work of pupils is faithfully shown. He was born in New York, July 13th, 1868, making him in his twelfth year. He is the son of Charles and Maria Menchner. When six years old he commenced going to one of the public schools, where he remained about two years. From the outset he was an obedient and attentive scholar. He left the school with an excellent record, and next entered Grammar School No. 21, in M'Kibbin Street, Brooklyn, where we saw him in the studies of the fourth grammar grade. He is making ninety-five per cent. He is an amiable boy, with an intelligent face and modest manners. All the teachers speak in his favor, and he is, in fact, one who interests all who come in contact with him. To say "Well done" to such a boy will not make him unduly proud, for he is too sensible for that, but it will give him the reward and encouragement to which he is entitled.



JOHN P. MENCHNER, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 21, M'KIBBIN STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

AGNES PURVIS,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 23, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

AGNES PURVIS is a bright and energetic girl who is at the head of the class of the first grammar grade of Grammar School No. 23, Brooklyn, N. Y. She was born in Brooklyn, and is now thirteen years of age. She is the daughter of John and Agnes Purvis. Here is the written statement in regard to her given us by the Principal of the school: "She



AGNES PURVIS, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 23, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

has always attended No. 23, having entered the lowest primary class at the age of six years, and passed through all of our grades in both departments, and now ranks as a member of our first grammar grade. Her class record has always been a good one, and her per cent. in the class during the past month of September stands at ninety-nine and one-half." Not another word need be added to such a statement as this, for it shows that Agnes Purvis has distinguished herself as a scholar, not only in one class, but in all; not only in one term, but through a series of years. The place of honor in every class has been her prize and place, and today, when an especial example is sought of the amiable and modest girl, and the ever-attentive and improving pupil it is found in her. She is of a delicate and sensitive organization, but with an untiring energy, as far as the mastery of her lessons is concerned. She has a pleasant face, and is a gentle and conscientious girl.

THROUGH THE HEART OF JAPAN.

(Continued from preceding page.)

"'How—still—my—limbs—are!' he quavered. 'This is strange!'

"He placed his hands on his chin, to find it covered with a long, silky, white beard.

"His hair was also snowy in color, and was flowing about his shoulders.

"'Oh, ye gods!' he exclaimed, in feeble accents. 'I am bewitched!'

"Faintly and wearily, he slowly descended the mountain side, and hobbled into his native village.

"He recognized its one street, but the houses he had, as he thought, but that morning left new, were old and patched, while the people at the doors gazed on him as though he were a stranger or a ghost.

"Even the dogs regarded him suspiciously, then sniffed at his ancient garments and shook their heads.

"'My friends,' he tremulously asked, 'is this not the village of Sozeo?'

"'Most venerable teacher,' answered the elder of the place, 'the humble title of our commune is what you name. But who are you?'

"'I' he exclaimed—'I am Lo-wen, the wood-cutter. That house,' pointing to a ruined hovel, 'was this morning, mine; now I see it peopled with female *hinnen* (beggars). By whose order were they allowed to disfigure and inhabit it?'

"The elder bowed respectfully and said:

"'Most venerable teacher, those wretched women are the seventh generation of a wood-cutter named, like yourself, Lo-wen. He was a pious man, one who would sit for hours in the woods reflecting upon yo and in, instead of cutting down trees and selling them for the benefit of his family. Of the latter, only females are now living.'

"'Eh?' mumbled Lo-wen, clutching at his beard. 'What do you say? If my wife has been telling stories about me I will beat her. *I* am Lo-wen, I tell you!'

"'That is impossible!' said the elder. 'Come, let me show you the records. They state Lo-wen ran away from his home in order to avoid paying his debts. His offspring have always been beggars!'

"He led the way to the City Temple, and producing a scroll marked 'Descendants of the runaway woodman, Lo-wen,' bade the stranger read it.

"The archpatriarch took the roll of paper in his palsied hands and read with great emotion, then, turning to the elder, said:

"'I see it all! I understand, my son. Those foxes bewitched me, and kept me watching their game until the years amounted to centuries.'

"'Surely he is crazy,' whispered the wife of the elder, who, with a crowd of villagers, was listening to what passed between her husband and the aged stranger.

Lo-wen, whose hearing was still very sharp, overheard this speech, and turning to the people, said:

"'Alas! alas! I have been bewitched. Good folks, I pray you pity me. I am indeed an unhappy being! What I just now dreamed occurred this morning took place two hundred years ago. I am justly punished for my sin in desiring to kill those foxes. Wife, children, friends—all have vanished into the mist of the past, and I—I—I—am *alone*, with no one to care for me!'

"Here he paused and wept. As the tears trickled down his beard, the people averted their faces and sobbed with sympathy, and presently the elder said, bowing respectfully:

"'Most honorable archpatriarch, permit your townfolks to take care of you. We will assume to ourselves the happiness of providing you with rice, clothing and a handsome coffin, which shall be made and placed in the reception-hall of a house we will build for you.'

"Lo-wen listened like one in a dream, but did not reply.

"As the elder was waiting in a humble attitude, such as in all civilized countries is observed toward the aged, a singing-girl, named Kee-se, one of Lo-wen's descendants, advanced to him, and after performing *kow-tow* (the Respectful Ceremony), said:

"'Oh, ancient and venerated ancestor, let it not be told that your descendants permitted you to become a pensioner on the bounty of your village! I will sell myself for a hundred pieces of silver, and the money shall be invested to provide you with a home, food and a handsome coffin. All the men of our family are dead, and it is left to my humble women to sustain the honor of our name!'

"Lo-wen wept as he listened, then, saluting her, said:

"'Kee-se, you are, indeed, worthy to be my descendant, but I cannot permit you to sacrifice yourself for me! I predict that you will marry a rich man, and your children shall become advisers to the Emperor!'

"After gravely saluting the assembly, he handed the copper ax-head to Kee-se, saying:

"'Keep that, for it will bring you fortune! It bears my name and a motto, which may be read in two ways, namely:

'Be good and work,
or
Work and be good.'

"I followed the first reading—attended more to meditating upon the deeds of the gods than to supporting my family;" then, turning to the people, he continued: "I charge you to practice the spirit of the second meaning. Work and sustain your helpless, after doing which, you may devote your leisure hours to meditating upon the mysteries of the gods. In condemning me to lose the happiest portion of my life—the prime of my manhood—the foxes justly punished me for my inattention to the wants of my children!"

"After once more saluting them, he visited the graves of his ancestors, where he prayed and offered incense; then, refusing all further aid, slowly and feebly reascended the mountain and vanished among its mists."

"That's a grand old story—ahead of Irving's!" said Orv.

"And it beats the whisky-flavored, brutal play of 'Rip Van Winkle'!" remarked Dan. "In the Chinese story, Lo-wen was, at least, a sober man. If he had a fault it was being too pious. There's a fine moral in your legend!"

"How Washington Irving must have grinned when the critics praised his *creation*!" said Johnnie.

"There is nothing created," observed Nami. "The Chinese author who wrote 'The True History of the Pious Woodcutter, Lo-wen,' borrowed the germ of his idea from an ancient Veda story, which is as old as the hills we stole from the Chinese; the latter story was adapted by your American author, and your play-maker preyed upon him. Come, it is growing late, and it is high time we visited the silk-weavers!"

(To be continued.)

"Through the Heart of Japan" was commenced in No. 471.

THE MYSTIC THREE:

SHOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE BOYS WHO BELIEVED ALL THEY READ.

By PIERCE CUTTING.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DESPAIR.

BEFORE any of the astounded actors could make a move, Hackslish Snick was at Simeon Walsingham Pogsley's side.

Gideon Goble would have been there, but in endeavoring to follow them he lost his footing and tumbled head first into the orchestra.

His head and shoulders disappeared in the bowels of the big drum with a noise like the explosion of a thousand-pounder shell, and he stuck there with his legs out, and kicking violently.

The audience at first thought it was all part of the play, and applauded vociferously.

After a second's pause one of the stage Indians began to appreciate the situation, and struck Sim's gun-barrel up.

The weapon went off, and sent a bullet whistling up among the flies.

This served to set all the stage in confusion.

The Indians fell back, and Sim made a leap at Swamping Buffalo, who still clutched the pale-faced maiden by the hair.

The warrior tumbled backward, with his assailant on top of him, pulling the heroine's wig off as he fell.

Morally certain that the savage had succeeded in scalping his unfortunate victim, Sim snatched his tomahawk from his hand and raised it above his head.

It would have gone hard with the poor actor if one of the bystanders had not leaped forward and caught the upraised arm.

The thankless Sim struggled manfully, and a couple of other painted savages had to come to their companion's assistance.

Meanwhile, Hack had sprung to the side of the heroine and clasped her round the waist.

"Fear not, fair maiden," he said, after the manner of his favorite heroes; "you are safe."

"Safe!" repeated the lady.

"Yes, safe."

"From whom?"

"From those merciless red fiends who would have slaughtered you."

"You little idiot! let me go," screamed the indignant lady. "Are you crazy?"

"Mad for revenge upon your persecutors, yes." This was too much.

The actress made sure now that the speaker was insane.

"Help! Murder! Help!" she shrieked.

And to Hack's infinite amazement she commenced to plow up his face with her finger-nails.

To add to the confusion, while Hack's expressive countenance was being thus mercilessly fresco-ed, and Sim struggled on the stage in the grasp of half a dozen enemies, a dozen men variously dressed as trappers and soldiers swarmed out from the wings.

It was the rescuing party whose functions our Buckerville heroes had usurped.

They began separating the combatants, while the stage-manager rang the curtain down.

The audience, meanwhile, had scented the fact that there was trouble somewhere.

And, as audiencies generally do, they became panic-stricken at once.

To add to the confusion, some one raised the dread cry:

"Fire! fire!"

Then a regular stampede began.

The Mystic Three, however, had their own affairs to attend to, and took no interest in what was going on in the front of the house.

At least two of them did not.

By the time the curtain fell, some sort of order had been restored on the stage, and Sim and Hack had been hauled to their feet.

The first person who accosted them was the stage-manager.

He bounded at them like a bull rushing at a red rag, and roared:

"Blank your infernal blank, blank, blank eyes, what is the matter with you, anyhow?"

"Nothing that I know of," responded Sim, as coolly as he could.

"I wish I could say the same," groaned Hack, mopping the blood from his eyes. "I'm slaughtered like a pig at sausage-time."

"What the blazes do you mean, you confounded young idiots!" roared the irate stage manager, "by bursting up the play in this way? Are you crazy?"

"If I was half as bad as you are I'd think I was."

"My stars! What cheek!" gasped the stage manager, fairly paralyzed by the speaker's effrontery.

"I'd hammer the head off of you for two pins, jumping in on me and spoiling my best scene," cried Swamping Buffalo, in very un-Indian-like English.

"What did you do it for?"

"We wanted to rescue the girl——" began Sim, trying to explain.

"Rescue the girl!" shouted the stage-manager, aghast. "Well, of all the slab-sided, tow-headed, double distilled, brass-mounted, natural born damn fools I ever saw, you beat the deck. Why, you pudding-headed lunt, don't you know this is a play?"

"It didn't look much like a play," responded Sim.

"Oh, it didn't. Well, you needn't have bothered yourself whether it did or not; here Barney."

And he summoned a stalwart stage carpenter.

"What'll I do, sir?"

"Fire those two lousy young bummers out."

"Will I give 'em the one, two, three, no?"

"Yes; or one, two, three hundred, if you like."

"All right. Now, then, come along wid you."

And Barney collared the two Devastators in a twinkling.

They kicked like young steers, but despite their struggles he dragged them off the stage.

Through various dark passages and staircases were they hauled to the stage-door, whence they were shot forth by the energetic application of his foot to a portion of their anatomy that, from their mishap at dinner, was already sufficiently tender.

Fortunately, a pile of mud covered the hard stones of the street at the back door, and they saved their bones.

Meanwhile, Gid was having a very lively time indeed.

Much more so, in fact, than he fancied.

With some difficulty the drummer extricated him from the ruins of his instrument, and began at once to pummel him unmercifully.

Gid struggled vigorously to escape, and by a lucky push threw the musician off his balance.

The drummer fell with crushing weight upon the trombone-player, who, paralyzed with amazement, had not yet removed his instrument from his lips.

Consequently, when he fell over on his face, he swallowed about half a yard of brass and knocked all his teeth down his throat.

Springing to his feet, he attacked the unlucky drummer, and the two rolled on the floor, pounding one another with all their might.

Gid took this opportunity to make his escape.

Jumping over the orchestra-rail, he made for the front of the house.

In the confusion and excitement he managed to reach the lobby unnoticed, only to find that he had got out of the frying-pan into the fire.

For there he encountered Mr. Blivens.

That worthy personage, crimson with rage and stuttering with wrath, was vainly trying to calm the excitement, and prevent the audience from leaving the theatre.

The moment his eyes fell on Gid he pounced upon him like a tramp on a tree lunch.

"Here's one of the villains," he shouted; "here's one of the infamous young ruffians that are trying to destroy me."

And he banged Gid's head against the wall and dashed up and down in fury.

"What's the matter, Blivy, old boy," inquired Gid, as soon as he could recover his breath.

"Matter! you atrocious young imp of perdition; you've ruined me, that's what the matter, but I'll make you sweat for it, or my name ain't Leander Blivens. Where's them other scamps?"

"I bounced them," replied the stage manager, who had just come from the stage to aid in quelling the excitement.

"Oh, you did, did you," roared the indignant Mr. Blivens; "look out that I don't bounce you, then."

"You'd look nice bouncing me, wouldn't you?" returned the stage manager, in no very good humor at finding Mr. Blivens's wrath thus turned upon him.

"Why wouldn't I?"

"Because you couldn't run your dizzy old show without me."

"You think so, do you?"

"No. I don't think so; I know it."

"We'll see about that—just consider yourself discharged, Mr. Grooves."

"Oh, I'm to consider myself discharged, am I?"

"You certainly are."

"Then consider yourself punched in the jaw, and Mr. Grooves planted a well-directed blow upon Mr. Blivens's nose.

At the same moment Gid, who thought his chance had come, butted his bullet-head violently against Mr. Blivens's capacious stomach.

Uttering a howl of pain, Mr. Blivens released his hold of Gid's collar, and rushed upon Mr. Grooves.

Gid seized the opportunity and bolted.

He heard a confusion of cries and blows as he fled, but he darted around a corner and soon left the great temple of Thespis far behind.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AT THE WALKING-MATCH.

WHEN Gid regained the hotel he found that Sim and Hack had already arrived there, and were anxiously awaiting him in the office.

As the Devastators were repairing damages and comparing notes, and congratulating each other on their lucky escape, the landlord, who had heard of their return, approached them.

"Been to see the performance?" he said, in surprise.

"Why, the theatre can't be out yet?"

"Probably the low dive has not yet emptied itself," replied him, loftily.

"Low dive! Do I hear aright?"

"Unless you're deaf, I presume you do."

"There must be some mistake, gentlemen, I assure you."

"There was a mighty big mistake on your part in sending us to such a darned old gilt-show as that."

"It was a perfect fraud!" added Hack.

"I'm surprised, gentlemen—that's what I am. Didn't you like the play?"

"What play?"

"Why, the beautiful, wild, Western drama."

"There, you needn't go any further. I hope you don't call that thing a play?"

"It's simply magnificent," said Hackalish.

"Horrible!" added Gid.

"Enough to make a speckled hen sick," continued Sim.

"Well, I am clean dumbfounded," responded the landlord; "everybody says it's a beautiful play."

"It may be well enough for ignorant old swabs like you," remarked Gid, "but it's no good for gentlemen like ourselves, who have seen the world."

This last remark settled the landlord.

And while he stood grasping for breath to fitly rebuke such unheard-of audacity the Mystic Three stalked gravely out on the front door.

"What shall we do now?" asked Gid; "you don't mean to go back to the hotel again, do you?"

"Not much. Old Blivy will be around here with a club before long, and we'll be just as well off to be out of the way."

"I only hope he'll take it out of the landlord," said Hack, grinning.

"He'll do that, sure. If there's enough left of him to get there at all," replied Gid.

"Was he full of business when you left him?"

"Had a large contract on hand, and I guess all hands were on the strike."

"That'll do, Mr. Goble; don't try to make puns or you'll strain your intellect."

"Well, you haven't answered my question. What shall we do next?"

"I vote we go to some show," said Sim.

"A show at this time of night?"

"Why not? It's never too late to mend."

"I should think you'd had show enough for a while."

"Particularly as he made a holy show of himself," added Hack.

"I guess you wasn't far behind me," replied Sim.

"Lucky for you I wasn't."

"Why so?"

"Because you'd have been scalped if I hadn't stood by you."

"I didn't want any of your help."

"I suppose not."

"And Gid wasn't any good."

"Oh, he was studying music."

"Studying music!"

"Yes; he was acquiring a knowledge of the bass drum."

"Well, I'd have done just as well without either of you," resumed Sim.

"Yes, you'd have been kicked out all the same."

"Where do you want to go, Puggy?" interrupted Gid, anxious to stop their sparring.

"Well, it's too early to go to bed."

"Yes, by several miles. Not to mention the fact that we haven't got a bed to go to."

"And we shan't remain in the city very long."

"Probably not. I don't think they'd stand you more than a week."

"So, of course," continued Sim, unheeding the last shot, "we ought to see all we can now."

"Well, what do you propose?"

"Let's go to the great walking-match."

"What walking-match?"

"Thunderation! Hackalish Snick, don't you ever read the newspapers?"

"Of course I do."

"Then you ought to know that the great six days' go-as-you-please is now going on."

"Is it going on as you please?"

"Don't be an idiot if you can help it."

"I can't help being near one."

"Why not?"

"Because I'm along with you."

"Thank you."

"Don't mention it; you're perfectly welcome."

"Where is this walk?" asked Gid.

"Oh, somewhere up-town. We can find it easy enough."

"Let's go, then."

"Agreed."

And the Mystic Three boarded a passing car and rode up-town.

"What do they do at this walk?" inquired Gid, as they rode along.

"Why, they walk, that's all."

"All the time?"

"Day and night."

"Without any rest?"

"Not a particle."

"What do they do it for?"

"To win the race, stupid."

"And what do they get for it?"

"All they win."

"Mr. Pugsley, the amount of information anybody can't get by asking you questions is simply wonderful."

"Here we are," cried Sim, desirous to answer Gid's last remark, as the car stopped in front of a large building, which was brilliantly lighted and from which the blare of a band proceeded.

Paying the fee demanded, the Mystic Three entered and gazed about them.

The hour was late, and at the moment it happened that not a single one of the score or more of contestants was on the track.

"Where's the walkers?" demanded Gid, staring in every direction, and finally putting the question to a boy about his own age who was leaning over a railing.

"They're takin' a rest," replied the youth addressed.

"Why, I thought they walked all the time."

"Oh, they have to stop to lie themselves now and then."

"Oh themselves! What for?"

"To keep their joints limber, greasy."

"What sort of oil do they use?"

"Goose-fat; so you'd better mind your eye."

"Why so?"

"Why, they might run short, you see. They'd scoop you in and bile you down in no time."

Discovering that he was being made game, or rather a goose of, Gid bestowed a glance of haughty scorn on the youth, who didn't seem to mind it in the least, but on the contrary burst into a loud guffaw and walked away.

For about an hour the Mystic Three perambulated about the garden, without seeing the least sign of the walkers.

The fact was that the pedestrians had gone off the track for a long rest.

Hackalish was the first to become impatient.

"Look here, Puggy," he said, at length, "I thought you brought us here to see a walking-match?"

"Well, you're here, ain't you?"

"Yes, I am, to my sorrow, but I haven't seen any walkers."

"Oh, they're taking a sleep," replied Sim, who had ascertained that fact from an attendant.

"It's a sleeping-match, is it?"

"Looks like it," said Gid, in great disgust.

"It's a regular fraud," said Hack. "We ought to get our money back."

"Don't be in a hurry," said Sim, cheerfully; "they'll soon be out again. Hello! there's one of them now."

And sure enough, a lame, tired and bedraggled-looking pedestrian came limping round the track.

The Mystic Three watched him until he had made four or five circuits, looking the picture of despair.

"Well," remarked Hack, "this is lively, and no mistake."

"Almost as much fun as a second-hand funeral," said Gid.

"Or a Quaker meeting."

"When you find out any more walking-matches, Puggy, be sure to let us know. I wouldn't miss staying away from one for the world."

Sim made no reply.

He was really as much disgusted as the others, but his pride would not let him own it.

"I say, Sim," exclaimed Hack, suddenly, as if a brilliant idea had just struck him, "let's run a race once round the track; it's the only way I see to get the worth of our money."

"All right," said Sim, brightening up a little; "I'm in."

"So am I," said Gid.

Accordingly they went to the head of the track, ranged themselves in line, and started off at top speed.

As they sped round the track they overtook the solitary walker, who had to dodge against the rail to escape being run over.

At the same instant a man sprang upon the track before them and shouted:

"Stop! you scoundrels, stop! Help! murder! They're tryin' to poison the Prairie Shanghai."

Before they could check themselves, they came into violent collision with the speaker, who was the trainer of the limping pedestrian, and all four rolled on the sawdust.

What new spectators now remained in the place rushed to the spot, and crowded around them as they got up.

There was a babel of voices; above the rest rose the loud complaints of the trainer, who asserted with much violence that they had attempted to poison or disable his man.

Their protestations of innocence were in vain.

Hustled about by the indignant crowd, and kicked by the angry trainer, within three minutes they were thrown out of the Fourth Avenue entrance, and found themselves once more adrift.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A TRIP TO JERSEY.

THE Mystic Three sniffed the air of Fourth Avenue with considerable contusion for a minute or so. Then Hackaliah Snick remarked:

"Well, in the language of the poet, now we are fixed."

"There's more truth than poetry in that," observed Gid.

"What poet said that?" demanded Simeon Wallingham Pugsley.

"It might have been Shakespeare," returned Hack; "but it wasn't."

"Well, whoever it was might have gone a little further."

"How?"

"And told us how we are going to get ourselves unfixed again."

"I'm not a poet," commenced Gideon Gobie.

"What?" exclaimed Hack.

"You don't mean it?" cried Sim.

"Are you sure?" demanded Hack.

"Think it over again," advised Sim.

"Don't be rash."

"You're too modest."

"Gideon Gobie, I blush for you."

"Why?" demanded Gid, testily.

"Saying you're no poet."

"Well, I'm not."

"What see you, then? A goit?"

"Not every man can be a goi, no more nor every sheep a poit," quoted Sim.

"I'd rather be anything but a jackass," remarked Gid, with withering sarcasm.

"Why ain't you, then?" inquired Hack.

"Why ain't I what?"

"Anything but a jackass."

"Jack, ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies."

"You tell 'em without being asked."

"Well, I'm not telling you one now, anyhow."

"Tell it, and let's judge for ourselves."

"We've got to get."

"To what?"

"Slide, levant, meander, skip the gutter, jump the town, in short. If we go on like this for a few days longer New York will be too hot to hold us."

"It's getting uncomfortably warm already."

"Just so. Then don't you think we had better bounce?"

"Where to?"

"I saw an advertisement of a schooner going to sail for the Spanish Main to-morrow."

"She will have to wait, then," said Hack; "I've no objections, I'm sure."

"We could get passages on her."

"I s'pose we could."

"Then why not let us do it?"

"For the best reason in the world."

"Which is?"

"That we don't want to?"

"Who don't want to?"

"Sim and me."

"But I do."

"Then go ahead and do it."

"And what will become of you?"

"Oh, we'll try to take care of ourselves. Eh, Sim?"

"You bet!"

Gideon Gobie gave vent to a groan of disappointment.

"You're the selfishest lot I ever saw," he said.

"Not a bit of romance in you, either. A life on the billows has no charm for you."

"Not much! The only schooner we want is a pirate schooner."

"Or a shipment of bullion in a stage-coach."

"Our bark is in the forest of the Far West."

"You'd have me barking in a lunatic asylum if you keep on making tough puns like that."

"Then we'll stop; for it would be cruel to the other lunatics. Mr. Gobie, your proposition in regard to jumping the town is voted excellent."

"Then how do you propose to do it?"

"By way of the railroad."

"Darn the railroad!"

"It may need mending by the time we get through with it. But what are you kicking about?"

"I'm getting tired of dry land, that's what I'm kicking about."

"Then let's get on the water. We have got to cross the North River, you know."

This prospect cheered the dismal Gid up a little, and the party set out without further squabbling.

It took them a couple of hours to find the North River, when they were directed by a policeman to the Jersey Central Railroad ferry.

"Is there a riot over there?" demanded the officer, after imparting the desired information.

"Not as I know of," replied Sim.

"Nothing. Only I wondered what brought the army out to-night."

"Now, what did he mean by that?" demanded Sim, as they continued their way.

"Bakes alive! don't you drop?" asked Hack.

"No, I don't."

"Well, since there ain't any house handy to fall on you, I'll explain. He meant us."

"He might have said so, then."

"He didn't know how dumb you are, or he would."

"We've got the style of soldiers, to be sure," interposed Gid, before Sim had time to get mad.

"That's what caught him, I suppose?"

"Cert. But here's the ferry."

There was a boat in, and a number of baggage-smashers were trundling barrows loaded with baggage on board.

The Mystic Three were passing through the gates along with them, when a jolly-faced man in a blue suit, with brass buttons, yelled:

"Hi, there!"

"What's up now?" demanded Hack.

"Where are you going?" asked the puffy-faced man.

"Why, across the river, to be sure."

"They s'pose you qualify."

"Do what?"

"Disburse; fork over; pan out."

"Pan out what?"

"Your fare."

"I always try to be."

"Try to be what?"

"Fair to everybody."

"Well, dash my buttons!" cried the puffy-faced man. "I believe they're making game of me, the young varmints."

And he grabbed at Hack's collar.

That hero ducked and avoided him, while Gid, who, from the puffy-faced man's blue and brazen uniform, inferred that he was a policeman about to arrest them, put out his foot and tripped him up.

The man tumbled on top of a narrow load of trunks, and smashed the leather hatbox, which surmounted the pile, as flat as a pancake.

"Confound your picture!" yelled a gentleman, to whom the hat-box evidently belonged. "Why don't you mind your clumsy legs?"

"Whose clumsy legs are you talking about?" demanded the ferryman, scrambling to his feet.

"Why, yours, splay-footed lout."

"Well, I may be splay-footed, but my fists are all right. See for yourself."

And the angry official planted a blow on the irate gentleman's nose.

The latter retorted by a counter assault on the ferryman's proboscis, which knocked him back among a group of ladies and gentlemen, who were hurrying on toward the boat.

He tumbled against a vinegary-looking elderly female, who formed one of the party, and a vicious little terrier dog she was carrying in her arms gave a shrill snarl, and fastened its teeth in his ear.

"Take him off," yelled the ferryman. "Murder alive! he's tearing my ear off!"

"Sick him, Beauty!" screamed the dog's mistress. "Bite him, bruise!"

The terrier evidently knew whom to obey.

He held fast to his victim's ear with as good a set of teeth as ever a mortal terrier was blessed with, meanwhile scratching deep weals in the man's face with his sharp claws.

Nor was the terrier's assistance idle.

Wolfe her pet did his duty, she kept banging the unfortunate ferryman over the head alternately with a handbox which she held in one hand and a stout, old-fashioned gingham umbrella which she clutched with the other.

To add to the confusion, a bull pup which belonged to the ferryman came to his master's aid and pounced on the spinster, fastening his teeth in her skirts.

She gave a piercing shriek, and fainted dead away, just as the Mystic Three, profiting by the commotion, scattered down the slip and leaped on the boat as she steamed out of the dock.

"What's the matter there?" asked one of the deckhands, who was pulling up the chain. "Is the town afire?"

"I'll be dog-goned if I know," responded Sim.

And he laughed so fiendishly over his pun that Hack and Gid bent over the railing and pretended to be very sick at their stomachs, indeed.

"Well, of all the lunatics," muttered the deckhand.

And he hurried away to tell the rest of the crew that an insane asylum had broken loose, and three of the escaped patients were on board, armed to the teeth and looking for some one to kill.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MORE TROUBLE.

BY the time the boat neared the Jersey shore the Mystic Three had recovered their equanimity, and were quarreling about which train they should take for the Far West, and whether they should try to steal their passage or buy tickets.

They had not the remotest idea to what point the road they proposed to honor by traveling on would take them, but that did not make the slightest difference.

The general direction was westward, and they asked no more.

Like the man who started to go to the moon, they knew they had to keep on going till they got there; so a trifle of a few thousand of miles didn't count.

So deeply interested were they in their discussion that they took no note of an interesting fact.

They had suddenly become the objects of general attention.

Groups of passengers had gathered all around to stare at them, and they did stare with all the eyes they owned.

But they kept a respectful distance all the same, none of them approaching the pilgrims from Suckerville closer than a dozen feet.

Sim's attention was at last attracted by hearing a lady's voice remark:

"Poor, poor lads!"

"It is sad," said a gentleman who was with the speaker.

"So young, yet so unfortunate!" sighed the lady.

"Are you sure of what you say, my good man?"

"Sure as nails, mum," responded the deckhand, who was the party addressed.

"And they are really suffering from dementia?"

"From which, mum?"

"From aberration of the mind."

"Well, I don't know about that," replied the man, doubtfully.

"But you said so."

"Said wot, mum?"

"That their reasons were dethroned."

"I never said nothing about reasons. I don't believe they could tell wot reasons they has."

The lady stamped her foot impatiently.

"Such stupidity is ridiculous," she said, sharply.

"What did you say, then?"

"I said they was as crazy as bedbugs, mum, and so they is."

"Are you talking about us?" demanded Sim, beginning to become restive.

The deckhand retreated a step.

"That's all right, young fellier," he said, soothingly, adding, in a hoarse whisper to the people around him: "You have to humor looneyticks."

"It's not all right," said Sim.

"Then it's all wrong, of course."

"What do you mean by saying it, then?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Well, blame me! If you mustn't be crazy."

"There!" exclaimed the man. "Do you hear that? They always think everybody's crazy but themselves."

"So I have heard," gasped the lady.

"To be sure," said her companion."

"That's so," added a dozen voices.

The Mystic Three glared at the speakers, momentarily dumb with amazement.

They had been mistaken for pretty much everything already, but to be considered lunatics was too much. Their souls revolted at the bare idea, and Sim said angrily:

"I guess the crazy people are all on the other side of the house. What's got into you folks, anyhow?"

And he advanced toward them, closely followed by his companions, their weapons glittering in the moonlight.

The crowd retreated as they advanced, until someone made a dash for the ladies' cabin.

Everybody followed suit, and in a minute the deck was clear, while half a dozen men leaned against the cabin-doors to prevent the supposed maniacs from forcing their way in.

This move put the Mystic Three in complete possession of the deck.

In consequence of the lateness of the hour, there was not a great number of passengers on the boat, and these had all assembled to look at the crazy people.

Consequently, when they intrenched themselves in the cabin, they left the rest of the craft untenanted.

The delegates from Suckerville were naturally indignant.

"For half a cent I'd give 'em the benefit of my gun," said Hack.

"Such idiots ain't fit to live."

"I'd like to give 'em a good scare," observed Gid.

"They've got a tolerable good one already, I should say," remarked Sim.

"They could stand worse, couldn't they?"

"I s'pose so."

"Then let's give it to 'em."

"But how?"

"There's two doors to the cabin, ain't there?"

"Yes."

"Well, you two go to the other end of the boat; do you see?"

"They haven't thought of that door."

"That's so."

"Make a rush in that way."

"Just so."

"And I'll break for this end. If we don't see some fun before we're through, then I'll give in."

Hack and Sim waited for no further explanation.

They quickly made their way to the other end of the boat, where, as Gid had inferred, the cabin-door was unguarded.

Gid, meanwhile posted himself, ready for the rush.

There was a minute of awful silence, the calm before the tempest.

Then a blood-curdling yell, followed by a pandemonium of shrieks and affrighted cries, announced that the two Devastators had effected an entrance into the cabin.

At the same time Gid gave vent to a responsive howl, and discharging his gun, made a rush for the other door. The frightened passengers were between two fires.

In their rear came Sim and Hack, flourishing their weapons and uttering demoniac howls, while Gid added to the uproar by pounding on the cabin-doors.

Those of the passengers who were behind, of course pressed forward, and the whole crowd were soon jammed up against the front doors, the women screaming and the men shouting in frightened tones for help.

The pressure on the doors at length became too great, and the barrier suddenly gave way.

The terrified passengers rushed forth as if they had been shot out of a gun, and bore everything before them.

Gid was knocked down and trampled on by a dozen or two, as the people rushed madly for the other cabin, with the other two "devastators" at their heels.

Before Gid could pick himself up, or Hack and Sim overtake the fleeing crowd, the latter had gained the other cabin and barricaded the doors.

The boat was entering the slip at the moment, and the Mystic Three saw that their opportunity to escape had come.

Before the boat touched the dock they leaped ashore, and darting past the astounded bridge-keeper with a yell, ran out through the depot and into the freight-yard.

Scarcely waiting to secure the boat to the dock, the dock hands and a motley crowd of brakemen, gate-keepers and baggage men hastened in pursuit.

The rumor quickly spread that three dangerous lunatics had escaped, and the story was soon embellished with the addition that they had killed half a dozen people at least.

Hastily arming themselves with sticks, pieces of board and switch-rods, the party ran after the Mystic Three, and that band of heroes had scarcely arrived in the freight yard beyond the depot when they found that their pursuers were at their heels.

"Great thunder," cried Sim, looking back, "if here don't come a whole regiment, and they're after us to a dead certainty."

"Then we'd better get," remarked Hackaliah; "there's too many of 'em for another scrimmage."

"Where'll we git to?" asked Gid, apprehensively.

"Anywhere out of this."

And Sim set off on a dead run, closely followed by his two companions, just as their pursuers rushed out of the depot.

Dodging under freight-cars, stumbling over tracks and switches, the Mystic Three led their would-be captors such a chase that half the party soon gave up in despair.

But a few of the boldest persevered, and the Devastators, who were getting badly out of breath, were in imminent peril of being run down and captured, when, on bolting around the corner of a freight car at full speed, they came into collision with one of the little watch-boxes placed there for the switchman to shelter himself in during bad weather.

Being insecurely planted in its foundations, it tippled over with a crash.

And as they ran on they heard the howls of the astonished Irishman who happened to be inside, and who was now imprisoned beneath it.

The pursuers darted to the spot, feeling sure that they were about to capture the supposed lunatics, or find some one whom they had slaughtered.

By the time they had raised the fallen watch-box and rescued its occupant, the Mystic Three had reached a long freight train that stood in a side track.

The hissing of steam from the engine indicated that it was about to start.

The door of one of the cars was open, and moved by a common impulse, they bounded into the opening and crouched on the floor in the darkness.

From this safe retreat they heard the voices of their pursuers, as they gave vent to expressions of astonishment at their disappearance, while the Irish switchman was loud in denunciations of the "spalpeens" who had toppled him over and left him "lyin' loike a pig in a pen."

At length the voices died away in the distance, and the Mystic Three knew that that they had once more escaped.

"Well," said Gid, when assured that the pursuit was given up, "it strikes me that those fellows won't go into the lunatic catching business again in a hurry."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A GROAN IN THE DARK.

GIDEON GOBLE had scarcely given utterance to these prophetic words when the sound of voices outside admonished them that silence was a desirable commodity just about then.

"This is one of the through cars, ain't it?" said the first voice.

"Yes," replied the other.

"Then chalk her for Easton and lock her up."

And before the three inside passengers could make any remonstrance the sliding door was shoved to with a bang, and they heard the click of the padlock.

"Well, I'm blamed!" gasped Gid.

"No, you ain't," replied Hack. "You're locked in."

"And a pretty box we're in."

"Well, we know where we're going, that's one comfort," said Sim; "and we haven't been cornered."

In point of fact, the diminishing sound of the voices indicated that the men had moved on.

"We may have been cornered," remarked Gid, "but we're in a mighty black hole."

"We're booked for a through trip this time," said Hack. "So if going it blind is any comfort we can't grumble."

"We've got the car all to ourselves to grumble in, anyway," added Gid.

"We may as well make ourselves comfortable, for we won't get there before morning."

As Sim made this philosophic remark, the train began to move, and went rumbling slowly out of the freight-yard.

There being no help for it, the Mystic Three disposed themselves as comfortably as possible on the floor of the car, leaning back against the front wall, with their arsenal arrayed beside them.

Still they found that riding in an empty freight-car was anything but a pastime.

In plain, unvarnished English, it was very rough work, indeed.

The car, being without springs, bumped along over the track in a manner that was decidedly unpleasant.

Every minute they would be bounced up from the floor with a violence that made their teeth chatter and almost sent their hearts popping out of their mouths.

"Geewittaker, but this is tough!" exclaimed Hackaliah, as the train crossed a switch with a rattle and bang.

"What's tough?" demanded Sim, who had had foresight enough to fold his coat up and put it under him for a cushion, and was therefore taking it easy.

"Why, being hanged about in this way; there won't be enough of me to wad a gun by the time we get there."

"Oh, you want a palace-car, I suppose," said Sim, sarcastically.

"No, sir, I don't!" replied Hack. "But I would like to ride without being shook up till my teeth rattle in their sockets."

"Gid and I didn't mind it," said Sim.

"I suppose not; there's no reason why you should."

"Why isn't there?"

"Well, Gid has been shingled so much that he must be tough."

"Well?"

"And you're such a bag of bones that that shaking up can't hurt you any."

"You thank so, do you?"

"Yes, sir, I do. Why, you rattle when you walk."

"Well, I'd rather be a bag of bones, as you call it, than such a pudgy-looking mush-head as you are."

"Oh, you don't like my style, Mr. Pugsley?"

"No, I don't; and I don't believe anybody else does, either."

"I wouldn't trade off with you, anyway."

"Don't you get any gray hairs on that account."

"I don't intend to."

"You'd be mighty lucky if you had the chance."

"Keep on thinking so, and you'll never be troubled with having to trade."

By this time the train was moving at full speed, and the noise of the wheels made it difficult to carry on a conversation.

So the two disputants stopped growling for a while.

It was intensely dark in the car, and as it had recently been used for carrying grain, the motion of the train filled the confined air with fine dust, that soon set all three to coughing and sneezing violently.

"Great dustpans!" exclaimed Sim, after a paroxysm of coughing.

"What's the matter now?" queried Gid. "Have you caught cold?"

"I'm nearly choked."

"That ain't fair."

"Why isn't it?"

"Because it's cheating Jack Ketch."

Here Hackaliah Snick, who had sneezed until the tears were rolling down his capacious cheeks, groaned in a voice that seemed to be extracted through the toes of his boots.

"Oh, Lordy, Lordy! I'm most dead."

"How do you like it, Gid?" asked Sim.

But no reply came from the bold mariner, and both concluded that he must have fallen asleep.

The fact was, that Mr. Gobie having swallowed about half a peck of dust, was just then incapable of speech.

"Selfish brute," said Hack, viciously; "he's always asleep."

"Except when he's eating," added Sim.

"Poke him in the ribs, Sim," continued Hackaliah; "it ain't fair to keep the all to ourselves."

"It would be mean, wouldn't it?"

"Frightful."

And Sim gave the unlucky Gid a punch that knocked him half way across the car.

"What's that for, confound you?" demanded Gid, suddenly finding his voice:

"To wake you up."

"Who was asleep?"

"You were; you generally are, for that matter."

"I wasn't asleep at all."

"Mr. Gobie, I regret to announce that your statement is not characterized by a strict adherence to veracity."

"You mean that I'm lying?"

"That was the impression I intended to convey."

"Oh, cheese it," interrupted Sim; "we ain't playing Pinafore now."

"Why, I was as wide awake as either of you," cried the indignant Mr. Gobie.

"You've got a mighty queer way of showing it, then."

"I suppose I've got a right to go to sleep if I want to."

"Well, we thought you'd want to be awake when there was any refreshment going around."

"What refreshment?" asked Gid, with some show of interest.

"I thought that would fetch him," said Hackaliah. "Only just mention something to eat, and Gid's on hand every time."

"Why don't you answer my question?" continued Gid, unheeding this interruption.

"What question?"

"About the refreshment; have you got anything to eat?"

"Gobs."

"Solid chunks."

"A whole carload."

"Where is it, then?" demanded Gid, impatiently, feeling vaguely around him in the dark.

"It's in the air."

"In the air?"



A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.—AGENT CHAPMAN OVERHEARS THE PLOT TO MURDER HIM.

"Yes, sir, that's what I said."

"Sort of permeates the atmosphere, as it were," added Sim, with a snicker.

"Do you mean the dust?"

"Your gigantic intellect has at last grasped the idea, Mr. Goble."

"Hackaliah Snick, I wouldn't be a chuckle-headed idiot if I could help it."

"I know you wouldn't, but you she you can't help it."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, you are one, ain't you?"

Whatever answer the indignant Gideon would have made to this assertion was checked by a sudden exclamation from Sim.

"Good gracious! What's that?"

"What's what?" demanded Hack and Gid, simultaneously.

"That noise."

"What noise?"

"Didn't you hear it?"

"If we did we wouldn't ask you. What was it like?"

"Like a man being murdered—it sounded like a groan."

"I guess you imagined it," said Hack, scornfully.

"Keep quiet and listen, and maybe you'll find out whether I imagined it or not."

Accordingly the Mystic Three listened with bated breath. They were not called upon to do so long.

Through the clank and rattle of the speeding train came a sound which made their blood thrill with apprehension.

It was a deep gurgling groan, such as might be uttered by a human being in the agonies of death.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A DREADFUL DISCOVERY.

TO say that the "Devastators" were not frightened would be to state an untruth, and like the immortal father of our country, we cannot lie.

They were the worst scared trio of adventurers who ever left Suckerville or any other place.

This sound, proceeding so unexpectedly and ghastly from out the darkness, froze their blood with horror.

They felt their marrow turn to ice — cold chills crept down their spines.

It was just like a ghost story.



A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.—THE AGENT DISGUISES HIMSELF AS A SQUAW.

And though they didn't mind slaughtering whole tribes of Indians, or making any number of ships' crews walk the plank, they objected to being terrified themselves.

Clutching one another's hands with convulsive gripe, they crouched upon the floor of the car and listened, breathless.

Again came the dread sound, deeper, hoarser, more agonized than before.

To remain silent any longer was impossible, for it was as much as they could do not to shriek out.

So all three simultaneously emitted an exclamation of dismay.

As if in reply, the groan was reiterated.

Only this time, as the train was running more smoothly, it was so much louder that it rang in their ears like thunder.

Or the voices of their paternal parents calling them into the barn to be shingled or otherwise maltreated.

Sim could no longer keep quiet.

"What on earth can that be, fellers?" he demanded, with chattering teeth.

"It certainly was a groan," said Hackaliah, in a terrified voice.

"Nobody said it wasn't."

"And it was in this car."

"It couldn't very well be in the next one."

"Or in the locomotive."

"Then there must be some one in the car besides ourselves," said Sim.

"Couldn't you suggest something we don't know?"

"Yes. Who can it be?"

"Some fellow like us."

"That's impossible."

"Why is it?"

"Because there ain't anybody like us in the world."

"Well, I mean a fellow who is stealing a ride."

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Hack, brightening up; "it might be another stowaway."

"It must be."

"I never thought of that."

"Is it impossible?"

"We'll dispense with sarcasm for the present."

"Perhaps the poor fellow is sick," added Gid, in a tone of great relief.

"He must be, to judge from his voice."

"I don't blame him. I'm sick myself."

"But he may have hurt himself."

"Then it's our duty to assist him."

"I don't see how we can do that, since we are not able to assist ourselves."

"Well, we can find out what ails him, anyhow."

And raising his voice, Sim called:

"I say, is there any one there?"

There was no reply.

Thrice Sim repeated the summons, with the same unsatisfactory result.

"He must have fainted," said Hackaliah; "let's see if we can find him."

And he rose up and commenced feeling his way toward the other end of the car.

The others remained stationary, awaiting the result of his investigations.

Not that they were scared by any means, but they were willing he should have all the glory.

Real heroes are always generous.

Hack had not got far, however, before he was stopped by a shrill cry from Gid.

"Saks alive!" he shrieked.

"Well, what ails you now?" demanded Hack.

"Mercy save us! Look there!"

"Look where?"

"Right ahead of you."

Hackaliah did look, and gave a yell that would have done credit to a boot owl.

And no wonder.

For he saw something ahead of him that made him retrace his steps with the rapidity of a streak of greased lightning.

In staggering back he came into violent collision with Sim and Gid, knocking them both down and falling upon the former with such force as to flatten him out like a pancake.

For once, however, there was no war of words.

Without stopping to quarrel, all three scrambled to their feet and retreated to the forward end of the car.

And so, under the circumstances, would anybody else.

What the Mystic Three saw, shining out of the inky darkness that surrounded them, was a pair of eyes.

But such a pair of eyes!

A pair of optics that might have belonged to a fiend of the infernal regions.

They glowed like balls of fire, and to the excited imagination of the three "Devastators," seemed as big as dinner-plates.

And as bright as locomotive headlights on a Winter night.

"Great rattlesnakes!" exclaimed Sim, shaking as if he had a fit of the ague; "Did you see them?"

"See them!" groaned his companions; "didn't we, though?"

And each could hear the other's teeth chattering in the gloom.

"What can it be?" gasped Sim.

"Mercy knows!" quavered Hack.

"This is awful!" cried Gid.

"It's horrible!"

"Dreadful!"

"Frightfully frightful!"

"I never ever read of the like."

"Or dreamed of it."

"Or wanted to."

"What shall we do?"

"What can we do?"

"There's no way of getting out, is there?"

"Not a show for it."

"Then we can only do one thing."

"What is that?"

"Why, find out what it is, of course."

"I s'pose you hanker to do it?"

"Well, I don't banker to sit here shivering in the dark, without knowing what's going to happen next."

The speaker was Hackaliah Snick, who had partially recovered his presence of mind.

"And how are you going to do it?" demanded Sim.

"Why, this way."

And as Hackaliah spoke he struck a match and held it up before him.

As the blue flame blazed up, the Mystic Three strained their eyes in their endeavor to pierce the darkness that enveloped them.

Then, as the match burned brightly and for a moment illuminated the interior of the car, they saw a dreadful sight.

At the other end of the car a huge bear reared up on its hind legs, and seemed about to spring upon them.

Three yells of terror burst simultaneously from the astonished stowaways.

And tumbling over one another in their eagerness to escape, the Mystic Three fell in a confused heap in the most remote corner of the car.

Then, with a last flicker, the light went out, and left them completely at the mercy of the terrible monster.

[To be continued.]

"The Mystic Three" was commenced in No. 471.

A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.

SINCE the recent outbreak of the Ute Indians at the White River Agency, the Nez Perces at the neighboring agency at Salt Fork have repeatedly threatened the life of Mr. Chapman, the agent at that reservation. A few weeks ago Mr. Chapman, who had to stay away from the councils, as they did not want him. But Chapman seized occasional opportunities to secretly listen to their talks around the council-fire, and by his intimate knowledge of their language soon learned that their purpose was to kill him that night to facilitate their escape from the reservation. One Indian showed his intention to shoot him with a revolver, several of which had been secretly retained by the Indians. Mr. Chapman went at once to his tent, occupied by a squaw for a cook, poured a washpan of water on the ground, and with the mud smeared his face to disguise his color, then took the squaw's blanket and put it on, at the same time drawing it up over his head, squaw-fashion. Thus attired, having divested himself of his usual apparel, Mr. Chapman sallied forth and passed purposely close to the council-fire, still surrounded by Indians, and made his escape into the brush without attracting any attention. Once out of sight, he made all haste to reach the stock ranch of the Dean brothers, on Salt Fork, where he arrived, after some hours, in an almost exhausted condition, scarred and bleeding, and his shirt in tatters.



A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.—MR. CHAPMAN MAKING HIS WAY IN DISGUISE PAST THE COUNCIL-FIRE.

A Plucky Little Girl.

ON Sept. 13th, the little eight-year old daughter of A. O. Burroughs, who resides on Kent Street, Rochester, was sent downtown on an errand which required her to take along a pocketbook containing more than twelve dollars. On her return, as she passed the Clinton Hotel, on Exchange Street, she noticed that a poorly-clad, barefooot urchin was following her closely. She carried the pocketbook, which still contained twelve dollars, in her hand, for fear of losing it if carried in her dress pocket.

When she noticed the boy following her she quickened her pace. He kept close behind her until they reached the street upon which her parents reside. Soon after passing the corner the boy rushed up and grabbed the pocketbook from the little girl's hand. But as she was anticipating just such a move on his part, she snatched the purse away from him, tearing off a cord or a chain by which it was carried. The barefooted boy was disposed to resist, but the little girl kicked him in the shins as he approached her, until he was glad to desist. After she had been home and related what had occurred, Constable P. H. Griffin was summoned, and she accompanied him down to the heart of the city for the purpose of looking up and identifying the young robber, if possible. The identity of the boy is supposed to be known, and probably he will be arrested.

Rob Rollalong, the Runaway.

By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

AUTHOR OF THE "JACK HARKAWAY" AND "DICK LIGHTHEART" STORIES, ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DESERT ISLAND.

WHEN the good ship *J. B. Astor* was fairly under way, Rob Rollalong's delight was intense.

His fortune, which had been clouded for a time, was bright again.

He could snap his fingers at his persecutors, and enjoy a life which he really liked.

The sea to him was always better than the land.

Only one disturbing thought worried him, and that was that Hattie—pretty, innocent, winsome Hattie Elliott—might become the wife of Vangs.

Rather would he have seen her dead.

The *J. B. Astor* sailed, without any adventure worthy of note, to Savannah, where she had to touch.

Here letters were found awaiting the officers and crew.

Kedge had told Hen Arlick to write to him, and, if possible, give him some news of Vangs and the Elliotts. Hen had written him. "Got a letter?" asked Rob, as he saw him open and read one.

"Yes, my mail's in," replied Kedge.

Rob sighed.

He could not help feeling how friendless he was.

There was no one to write to him, poor orphan! Neither father nor mother would send him consolation on his long voyage.

If Hattie had only been true to the brave sailor boy, how nice it would have been to have received a few lines from her, and how it would have cheered him up!

But this could not be.

"Good news from home, good news for me,
Have come across the deep blue sea;
Good news from those I left in tears,
Good news from those not seen for years,"

sang Kedge, in joyful glee.

"You're an orphan, like myself," said Rob; "what good news can you have?"

"It's good for you."

"For me?"

"Yes."

"How?"

"My dear boy, read for yourself. My correspondent is Hen Arlick, and I asked him to mail a letter here, as I guessed it would reach here in time for me to pick it up. He promised me that if he could tell me anything about Vangs or the pretty little Hattie, he would not fail to do so, and, like a man, he has kept his word."

"It was very kind of you," replied Rob.

"Not at all."

"What does he say?"

"Read for yourself—that's all."

"I'd rather not. My eyes swim a little. They always get moist when I think of Hattie."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll read it," said Kedge.

"Fire away," replied Bob.

"*Tuesday.*

"DEAR KEDGE—Haven't very much news to give you. But if Bob Rollalong is with you, or you have any means of communicating with him, he will find it of interest. Soft Tommy has disappeared—been wiped out, some think, by Vangs in revenge for the injury he did him. By hook or by crook, as it may, Vangs has flitted. Mrs. Elliott and Hattie have gone with him, and, as far as I can understand, they have sailed for China in the ship *Destiny*. Hattie has not yet married Vangs, so there is hope for Rob.

("To be continued in my next.")

"I left off in a hurry yesterday, as a friend of mine said there was some excitement over in Tottenville about the finding of a body in the woods near Huguenot. So I took the ferry to Staten Island, and went to explore this last awful mystery. Who do you think the victim was? Poor Soft Tommy. His body was found in an advanced state of decomposition in the wood which runs between Mrs. Elliott's house and Vangs's late property. He was shot through the heart by a bullet. And every one thinks Vangs killed the lad, but there is no evidence to show who the villain was. You can draw your own conclusions.

"I have cut the circus business and returned to my newspaper life. A vagabond existence is all very well for a time, but a fellow soon gets tired of it, and that's my case. Rolling stones gather no moss. This is the truest saying ever I heard. I'm home now with mamma, and I think you like me well enough to be pleased to hear that I am doing well. I give mamma the best part of the money I earn. She says in two years' time we shall own our own house and lot. Bully, isn't it? Good-by, Kedge, and God bless you. Same to Rob. If he is with you, or you know where he is, tell him I wish him a bang-up good time, and hope he will always come out right. Brewster is very sick. Hope he'll croak. Don't you? Good-by, again. Your friend, "HENRY ARLICK.

"P.S.—What a spree if you and Rob were to meet with Vangs and his lot!

"P.S.S.—Suppose you both got wrecked, and met on a desert island, wouldn't it be fun for the snakes and beavers?"

"He's got a nice idea of natural history," said Kedge; "fancy beavers in the Pacific."

"Isn't he right on snakes?"

"Can't say; but I believe not. Perhaps we may have some experience that way, and then I shall be able to give you an opinion. Well, what do you think of the letter?"

"It's good news."

And Rob began to sing Kedge's song:

"Good news from home, good news for me."

He had scarcely sung the first bar when one of the ship's boys came up to him with his arms akimbo. This boy was named Jack Johnson.

In fact, he could scarcely be called a boy, for he was seventeen, and verging upon young manhood.

He was an Englishman, who had been in the Royal Navy, and, no doubt, quitted the navy for the good of the service.



A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.—ARRIVAL OF MR. CHAPMAN AT SALT FORK.

His name was Jack Jackson.

Jack was an impudent, devil-may-care, good-for-nothing sort of fellow.

He could work well enough when he liked, but that was not very often, as he was a great deal better at loafing.

His principle was this:

Never do anything yourself when you can get any one to do it for you.

During the voyage he had constantly nagged Rob, and evinced a personal dislike to him.

Kedge was Rob's friend, as we know, and being the third officer, he had a great deal of power.

If there was any disagreeable work to be done he would set Johnson to do it rather than Rob.



ROB ROLLALONG, THE RUNAWAY.—"WHEN THEY GOT NEAR THE SHIP, THEY SAW JOHNSON STANDING ON DECK. HE WAS INTENTLY WATCHING THEM. 'HE'LL GIVE IN, I EXPECT,' SAID ROB, 'AND BEG OUR PARDON.'"

This favoritism annoyed and irritated Johnson, who did not like the idea of a "blarsted Yankee" having a better berth than himself.

While Rob was, in his light-heartedness, singing "Good news from home," Johnson, as we have said, came up to him with his arms folded.

"That's the poorest sort of singing," he exclaimed.

"What's the matter with it?" asked Rob.

"It's too cheerful."

"I'll sing something sad," replied Rob, "if that will please you."

"Hadn't you better wait till we get to Rio?" replied Johnson.

"What for?"

"Because there is a young mule on the lower deck, and if he gets an idea that he can sing as well as you he'll never be worth a nickel to bray."

"Now, see here, Johnson," said Rob, "I don't want to be messy or ugly, I'm a white boy, I am, and can stand as much as most people; but when I'm talking to a friend I don't want you to be fooling around me."

"Oh, you go to Halifax!" replied Johnson.

"I don't choose to."

"Then go to a warmer place."

"Shut up, you evil-eyed son of a gun!" cried Rob. "You're bigger than I am, but I'll fight you and lick you."

"No, you can't! I'm an Englishman," replied Johnson, "and it would take two infernal Yankees like you to do it!"

"Would it?" said Rob, calmly.

"Yes, sir. A Yankee never licked a Britisher yet."

"I don't know about that. I've read that we licked you lots of times, and I'm going to have a try at whipping you."

"Me?"

"Yes, siree! The British lion may wag his tail, but the American eagle can flap his wings and bite his tail off for him."

"Go on with you. I've been in the British navy."

"It's a pity you ever left it."

"Why?"

"A good thing for the service—a pity for the ship you have sailed in."

"You don't often get fellows like me in your mercantile marine," said Johnson.

"Well, we're fortunate on that," replied Rob.

Kedge Anchor leant against the mainmast and looked on, an amused spectator at this encounter.

Johnson was bigger than Rob, and if it came to a fight, he determined to interfere if Rob was getting the worst of it.

"What do you amount to as a nation, after all?" said Johnson, with a sneer. "You're one-third Irish, one-third Dutch, and the rest a bastard sort of English."

"Have you anything else to say?" asked Rob.

"Oh, a heap; only I won't waste my breath with you. I'm sorry I ever came over here."

"So am I."

"Are you? That shows what a fool you are. A man who's been on board a British man-o'-war as first-class boy——"

"And got kicked out as first-class thief," interrupted Rob.

Jack Johnson reddened up to the eyes. "Who told you that?" he asked, with a nervous gasp.

"Oh, I guessed it."

"You fellows are always 'guessing.'"

"I've hit the truth this time, sonny, and don't you forget it. Stop your blowing about the British navy. What is your British navy?"

"Well, what is it?"

"All noble lords, and rum, and cat-o'-nine-tails. You can't keep a man afloat unless you dose him with rum half the time and flog him the other."

"We preserve discipline," replied Johnson.

"A nice set of boys you must be, to be disciplined in that manner. Take a turn with it, bub, and give us a rest."

Jack Johnson bit his lips. He wanted to provoke a quarrel with Rob, but as far as the discussion had gone, he had got the worst of it.

"What can you do?" he asked.

"I can bu'st you in the snoot!" answered Rob.

"Oh, talk English."

"Talk United States."

"I suppose you mean you can punch my head?"

"That's just what I do mean."

"Cheese it—cheese it," said Kedge.

"What for?" inquired Johnson. "I'll pound him to a pulp."

"Fish and cat, my lad—fish and cat."

"If I say it I mean it."

"Belay there—belay."

"Leave me alone, Kedge," said Rob. "He's a great hulking bully, but I'm not afraid of him."

"Am I a bully?" asked Johnson.

"Yes, you are. See how your English comes up, you Johnny Bull."

Johnson's only reply was to hit out at Rob, and send him rolling over the deck.

"Ha, ha!" he cried, triumphantly. "You're well-named, Rob Rollalong—Rollalong Bob."

But if he thought that he had an easy victory over the sturdy son of New Jersey, he was much mistaken.

The blow had been dealt Rob unawares, and having had no warning, he was naturally unprepared to defend himself.

Directly he got up he clinched his sledge-hammer fist and set his teeth together.

"Now, then, come on," he exclaimed.

"Want some more, do you?"

"Yes, Johnny Bull."

"All, right, my fine fellow; I can accommodate you, and no mistake. I'll show you some of the tricks the Whitechapel Pet taught me. Come on. I'm your Chickaleary Cove."

The fight then began.

Kedge continued to lean against the mainmast, and looked on unconcernedly.

The captain and all the other officers were on shore, and most of the crew were "liberty men," only the watch being on board, and they were occupied with their several duties.

Bully though the English boy was, he had plenty of courage, and could take hard knocks as well as here and there one.

It was a fair, stand-up fight.

We will describe it in the forcible, if not elegant, language of the ring:

Round 1.—Rob did not attempt to force the fighting; he dodged round his opponent, stepping back to avoid his blows, swinging his head round like a pendulum. At last he got well on the conk of Johnson, and tapped his claret. Johnson then landed one on the jaw, which was a rattler, and Rob falling down, time was called.

Round 2.—Johnson came up smiling, though bleeding profusely from the nose. He was not so anxious for punishment as before, fighting warily. Rob countered on the next, and Johnson hitting at his mug, got his right on the bread-basket. Rob, gasping for breath, fell against the mainmast. Time.

Round 3.—This time both parties were cautious in the extreme. Rob swung his arms round like the sails of a windmill, showing a decided lack of science. It was difficult to find out what his game was. At length it became apparent. Johnson struck him a corker on the left optic, but Rob brought his clinched fists one after the other down on his ears. This was a postman's knock, and found the parties at home. Johnson saw stars, and fell stunned to the deck. Time.

Round 4.—When Johnson came to time, the pleasant, confident smile had vanished. He was confused and dizzy in his head. Rob's nose was now yielding a copious supply of the ruby fluid, and his left eye was swelling visibly. Rushing in, he landed his opponent one, two, in double quick time, finishing up by another series of sockdologers on the ear. This mode of appealing to his senses did not suit Johnson for a cent, and he keeled over for the second time.

Round 5.—Johnson now toed the scratch, being very groggy on his pins, and struck out at random. Taking advantage of this, Rob hit straight from the shoulder, and punished him severely. He rattled away finely on the conk, and bunged up both peepers; while the castanet way in which he made the ivories rattle was a caution to dentists. Johnson was now battling feebly—fighting the air, in fact, and it was clear to all that he was badly beaten; but he struggled on, game to the last, and would not give in. Rob forced him against the bulwark, and he fell in the lee scuppers. Time.

Round 6.—It was fully a minute before the jubilant, but over-confident, Jack came to time, and when he did so, he was a sight to remember. His pimple was considerably swollen, and his face knocked all out of shape. Rob wasn't much better; but he could see out of one eye, and was not struggling with a tooth which he could not swallow. The spectators called out to Rob to go in and finish it right away, which he did. Johnson continued to strike out wildly; but the stunning blows he had received on the side of the head had taken all the steam out of his locomotive-works. Standing on tiptoe, Rob threw himself forward with all his force and landed a regular smasher on the forehead of his opponent, who reeled like a sapling in a storm, and then fell like Lucifer, to rise no more.

Summary.—This gallant and plucky mill, which resulted in the defeat of the game son of Albion by the New Jersey boy, was comprised of six rounds, and occupied exactly twenty-seven minutes ten seconds, as calculated by one of Benson's chronometers. It was more celebrated for attack than defense, and very little "skyuce" was exhibited on either side, though it must be called remarkable for the endurance it drew forth from both parties under severe punishment. Altogether, it was an interesting affair, and afforded much gratification to those who had the privilege of being present. So long as boys know how to handle their manleys, and are not afraid to use them, there is no fear of our Anglo-Saxon race degenerating.



TALKS WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—THE CITY OF PANAMA.—SEE PAGE 254.

When Jack Johnson fell on the deck, he lay like one dead, and Rob was alarmed.

"Is he dead?" he inquired.

"No," said Kedge, who was bending over the prostrate youth. "He breathes."

"I hope I haven't killed him."

"No fear; although I think we ought to call the doctor."

"There he is," said Rob.

"Where? Oh, I see him aft. Say, doc, won't you come here a minute?"

The doctor, who was a fussy, good-natured old fellow, fond of the sea, his pipe, grog and joke, hurried forward.

"What's the muss, boys?" he asked.

"Been indulging in the noble art of self-defense," replied Kedge.

The doctor smiled.

"Oh, I guess Jack Johnson wanted to learn a trick or two, and the New Jerseyman here was obliging enough to teach him?"

"Yes, sir."

"And he got all he wanted—eh?"

"I'll bet you," replied Rob, with a grin.

"It won't hurt him—do him good, I should say. He's too full-blooded and high-toned for a merchant vessel; been on board a British man-of-war, you know," said the doctor, imitating the Englishman's style to perfection, and making his hearers laugh till their sides ached.

The doctor's name was Ames, and he was much liked by the officers and crew.

If any one offended him he never forgot or forgave them, but waited until they got sick, and then—then he had his revenge, for he poured into their devoted stomachs all the noxious, beastly, and drastic drugs in the pharmacopœia.

"Is he all right, sir?" asked Rob.

"I don't know."

"He won't die?"

"Won't he? If you know more about it than I do what do you ask me for?"

"But will he?"

"It isn't your fault if he doesn't. You've pounded his pimple till it's like pulp, and if congestion of the brain does not ensue, or an effusion of cerumen overcome the cerebellum, he—"

"Oh, doctor!" continued Rob, alarmed at this scientific language; "what have I done?"

"Stop your yelping," exclaimed the doctor, "and hold up the lad's head while I get out my lancet. Kedge, bare his arm and hold it; I'm going to bleed him."

The lancet was struck into the youth's arm, but it was some time before the blood would flow; at length it came out in dark-looking drops, presently flowing freely. His opened his eyes, sighed deeply, and shut them again.

"He'll do," said the doctor, tying a handkerchief round the arm; "take him to his bunk. He can't hurt now."

Kedge carried him down in his arms.

"How did you manage to hit him so hard, young one?" asked the doctor of Rob.

"I banged him over the ears."

"Oh! you did?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, let me tell you not to do that any more," said Doctor Ames, "unless you want to kill a man. The side of the head is a tender place, and don't you forget it."

"No, sir, I won't."

"Now, I'm going ashore in the gig, and you can come with me. I'm in a great hurry, and haven't time to fix anything for the boy, but you take this prescription and get it made up at the first drug-store; go back in the boat and give it to him. Keep him quiet; d'ye hear me?"

The doctor wrote a prescription on a slip of paper and handed it to him.

Rob looked curiously at the strange writing and marks, thinking what a wonderful man the doctor must be.

Rob got the prescription made up, as the term is, and bringing it back to the ship, gave it to Johnson, who was himself again, though a little excited.

"Will you shake hands, old fellow?" said Rob.

"Will you?" replied Johnson.

"Yes, why not? We had a fair rough-and-tumble, and I got the best of it. Shake, and be friends."

"Not I. Why, I'd sooner touch a black swamp-snake. Darn your bluested eyes, you swab! I'll mark you for this. I'll pay you. If I don't, darn me. It is not often I speak bitter words, but when I do, I mean it."

"Please yourself. It don't make much odds to me."

"I'm your enemy for life, Rob Rollalong."

"Good enough," said Rob. "if it pleases you, it don't hurt me."

He went away to attend to his duty on deck. The next day Jack Johnson was around as usual, but not looking very pretty. He passed Rob with a black scowl on his brow, just to indicate that he really meant what he said when he was asked to make friends.

That afternoon the ship weighed anchor again, and started for her second port, which was Rio de Janeiro.

She made the Brazils without any incident, and started again, to stop no more until she reached the quaint old land of China.

Rob had almost forgotten his fight with Johnson, but the latter individual never spoke to him if he could help it.

He was afraid of a second whipping, for Rob had shown that he was the best man, out and out.

This rankled in the Englishman's mind, and he nursed up what he he fancied his wrongs until he could have murdered Rob.

One night when they were rounding Cape Horn, Rob was on deck. It was the second dog-watch, and had just struck six bells. The wind was blowing hard from the northeast. Heavy rain was falling, mixed with hail. Rob had on a waterproof coat and hat, but nevertheless felt very wet and cold. He was standing in the forecastle, thinking of home, as sailors will think, and dwelling affectionately upon the face of pretty Hattie, wondering where she was, and if she was sailing anywhere near him.

Suddenly he felt himself seized from behind. A pair of strong arms tried to propel him over the side of the vessel into the raging sea.

He cried out, but the wind carried his voice far away into the black howling night, and none could hear his cry.

Then he struggled, as only men whose lives are in danger will struggle, and a fearful wrestle took place on the skipper's deck.

He was fighting for dear life, and he put forth all his strength.

By accident, the man who wanted to assassinate him slipped, and Rob wriggled himself freeds.

The man darted away and disappeared in the darkness, uttering a fearful oath as he vanished.

Rob just caught a glimpse of the fleeing form, and saw that the fugitive was not much bigger than himself.

"Jack Johnson, for a dollar," he said.

Going to the forecastle hatch, he dived below and went straight to Johnson's berth.

He was inside, and apparently asleep.

Holding up a lantern, Rob dragged the blankets off him.

"What did you do that for," cried Johnson, pretending to wake up; "couldn't you let a fellow sleep? It ain't my watch."

"Men don't generally go to bed with their boots on," replied Rob.

"Oh! I was tired."

And you've got your clothes on, too. You are wet. Have you been on deck lately?"

"No, I haven't."

"If you do, and you know it, replied Rob. "Didn't you sneak up behind me just now and try to throw me overboard, you dirty hound?"

"Why, Rob, what are you thinking about? You must be out of your senses."

"Not I. My head's level enough. Now listen here, Jack Johnson, we don't come it right."

"I'm listening, but do you think for a moment that a fellow who has been in the British navy would do such a thing?"

"I've every respect for the British navy," replied Rob, "though it is as likely to have black sheep in it as the American or any other service. Scoundrels sail under every flag. But listen here, Jack Johnson."

"Well?"

"Don't you try that rig on with me any more, or so help me never! I'll get square with you, and your worthless life won't be worth an hour's purchase. I'm talking now."

"I hear you," replied Johnson.

"You're found out, and no amount of lies will help you worth a cent. I don't know that I won't tell the captain, and have you put in irons."

"Don't do that!"

"Will you promise to let up on me?"

"Yes."

"I'll forgive you this time, because I bear you no ill will, and want to live at peace with every one. Shake."

Their hands met, but Rob grasped only a cold, clammy, fishy sort of hand, in which there was no life, no warmth, no heart.

He went on deck again to attend to his duties.

It was clear that Jack Johnson was his enemy, and Rob had to keep an eye open, or some dark night he would find a last home in the waters of the Pacific.

However, he trusted that he had frightened him, and did not say anything to the captain or the officers, not even to Kedge, to whom he generally told all his little secrets.

All went well now for a fortnight, during which time the *J. B. Astor* made good time, aided by favorable winds. But on the 15th of December a tremendous storm set in. The ship was tossed about like a cork on the waves.

She lost her rudder, her bulwarks on the weather-bow were stove in, the foremast went by the board, and she scudded along under bare poles at the mercy of the winds and waves.

There was some danger of her foundering, or becoming water-logged, and all hands were kept at the pumps.

This fearful state of things lasted for three days.

During the whole time the gale continued, and the minds of the men were cast down.

On the night of the third day the captain and the first and second officers were standing aft, considering the propriety of abandoning the vessel and taking to the boats.

A heavy sea struck her, and the captain, with the two officers, were swept into eternity.

The carpenter now became captain of the ship, and did his duty to the best of his ability.

He, however, was very gloomy, for it seemed as if they were all doomed to destruction.

On the morning of the fourth day the storm, which had lulled somewhat during the night, assumed more violent proportions than ever.

Kedge took his reckoning, and consulting the chart, found that they were in the neighborhood of several islands. These were not named on the chart.

"Rob," said he, coming on deck, "I'm afraid we may as well say our prayers, though I don't like to tell the men so."

"Why?"

"They'd give way to despair, and if a ship's crew gets panic-stricken you can't do anything with them. They'd break into the spirit-room and raise a mutiny on their own."

"What's the danger?"

"I'll tell you."

He did not notice that Jack Johnson was behind him, drinking in every word he uttered.

"You see, we have no control whatever over the ship," continued Kedge; "and we are in the neighborhood of islands."

"All the better. We don't run so much risk of being drowned. Why not lower the boats and try and make for land?"

"No boats would live in such a sea as this."

"What are we to do, then?"

"Heaven only knows! The islands I spoke about are partly desert and partly inhabited."

"By whom?"

"Cannibals. It is just about here that Robinson Crusoe was wrecked on Juan Fernandez."

"Was it? That's one of my favorite books, and I should awfully like to visit Robinson's island. Perhaps we should find his house and his goats, and all sorts of relics of him."

Kedge smiled.

"How about the man-eaters?" he asked.

Jack Johnson slipped away as he saw the doctor coming along, and did not want to be caught listening, as his character for manners was pretty well established without that addition.

But he went straight to the men who were at work on the pumps, and told them what he heard Kedge say.

The men instantly left off pumping, and began to talk among themselves in a discontented and mutinous manner. Doctor Ames had overheard the last remark of Kedge, and he said:

"What's that you're saying about man-eaters?"

"We are among them, doc," replied Kedge.

"Is that so? I should like to have my medicine chest along and does some of them. They would not want to eat any more men, I'll bet."

"I'll bet what I'll think they would, doc," answered Kedge; "I have a grim and ghastly recollection of offending you once, and you dosed me until I thought life a burden, and I was inclined to hail death as a happy release."

"Moral, my dear boy—never get your doctor's shenegar up; but, to be serious, what is to become of us?"

"To-night will settle the question."

"How?"

"We are in the neighborhood of the islands I was speaking about, and I guess we shall strike before daylight."

"Is it possible? I wish I could give the wind and the sea some pills that would quiet them."

"Don't joke about the weather, doc," said Kedge, gravely; "we are in the hands of a higher Power than medicine."

"You are getting pious."

"I always had an undercurrent of that commodity in me. I'm a free sailing craft, and take an assorted cargo with me as I travel the ocean of life, but I'm always sure to have a bale of two of Bible on board, and a few cases of Jesus Christ, doc. So don't joke about that if you want to please me. We're on the threshold of eternity, and the God who made me knows that I never weakened at the prospect of death; still when the cold monster stares you in the face it's a solemn moment."

"That's so, my lad," replied the doctor, "and I take back what I said. You are a good boy and a good sailor. I am satisfied with your seamanship, and I feel sure that if it is in the power of mortal man to do it, we shall come out right."

"I thank you for that, doc," said Kedge.

"What are the men about?" cried Rob, suddenly.

The doctor and Kedge turned round and looked in the direction of the forecastle, where the men had assembled.

Seeing that the attention of Kedge, who was virtually captain, was directed toward them, Jack Johnson detached himself from the group, and with an impudent air staggered aft, followed by the crew.

Kedge met him amidships.

"What's your pleasure with me?" he asked.

"The men say they won't work any more, and have deputed me to ask you to lower the boats," replied Johnson.

"On what grounds?"

"They say we shall strike in the night on some desert shore, or still worse, on some cannibal island."

"This is open mutiny."

"Call it what you like," said Johnson.

"They can lower the boats if they like," said Kedge; "I shall stick to the ship. I have my duty to do to the owners, and I believe there is more chance of safety aboard than there would be in leaving her."

"So far so good."

"Is there anything else?"

"Yes. The men desire the key of the spirit room, and permission to take what stores they want with them."

"Stores they may have, but tell them from me that they shall have no spirits."

"In that case they shall help themselves."

"I'll shoot the first man who attempts to," said Kedge.

"What is the use of talking 'shoot' to me?" replied Johnson. "I'm armed, and so are several of the men. If you shoot you'll kill one man, perhaps two or three, but there will be a dozen left to avenge the one who fall, and you won't be alive in five minutes. You can bet your sweet life on that."

[To be continued.]

"Rob Rollalong" was commenced in No. 873.

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

THE CITY OF PANAMA.

THE Isthmus of Panama is the narrow strip uniting North and South America, and was first crossed by Balboa when he discovered the Pacific in 1513. Only five years after the city of Panama was founded on a gulf of the same name opening into the Pacific. The old city had a stirring history. It was a great port for all the rich treasure-ships from Peru, and English pirates frequently attacked and plundered it.

The city of Panama, previously to 1744 (when the trade between Europe and Western America first began to be carried on around Cape Horn), was the principal centre of trade on the Pacific Coast.

From that period, however, it became reduced in commercial importance, and kept on declining until the last few years. The establishment of the South Coast, the California, and the Central American steamship lines, all of which by which all the mails of these lines is carried on, the Panama railroad, have combined to render Panama once more a place of considerable importance, and now that a ship canal is projected across the isthmus, attention is again drawn to the old city. The original city of Panama was destroyed by the buccaneer, Sir Henry Morgan, in 1661, and its site is about six miles southeast of the present city, and is easily reached by water or land. The ruins of its ancient fortifications, towers, churches and public buildings are worthy of the attention of all who are interested in the early history of Central America, and are still records of Spanish greatness in that region.

In New Panama the houses are mostly built of stone, and in the Spanish style, the larger ones with courtyards and balconies, and the smaller reach but one story. The arrivals of steamers now average twenty-five a month, and of sailing vessels about two hundred a year.

Panama had sunk to be a place of little importance, when American energy, at the cost, it is said, of fifty thousand lives, built a railroad across the isthmus to facilitate communication with California.

Now that Mr. de Lesseps, the great French engineer, is proposing to build a ship canal across the isthmus, the old city acquires new interest, and our readers would like to know what it resembles.

As they know, the climate is terribly unhealthy, and the Panama or Chagres fever is fatal to most strangers. It swept off the railroad workmen by thousands, and the building of the canal will be no less disastrous to human life.

The city of Panama is situated on a rocky promontory, which juts out into the bay from the high volcanic hill Ancon, and projecting a quarter of a mile into the sea. It has one of the finest roadsteads in the world. If the traveler should arrive by the railroad, he will be delighted with the sight of a beautiful panoramic view.

On the left are the commodious warehouses, and the long, covered wharf of the railroad company, alongside of which the small steamers and tugs lie discharging or loading cargo for the ships anchored in the lower bay. Beyond the wharf, a white sandy beach sweeps around in a half-circle for about a couple of miles, skirted by tangled masses of foliage, interspersed with groups of cocoa-trees.

A ridge of high and broken land rises up behind, and slopes gradually down toward the peaceful ocean that stretches out to the horizon before you.

On the right, the high-walled and turreted city stands boldly out into the ocean, as it still claiming dominion over the limitless expanse.

Within the walls a mass of high tiled roofs, with here and there a dilapidated tower or pearl-shelled spire, combine to present a scene more beautiful than is often beheld.

The principal buildings include a beautiful cathedral, a college, and several convents, all of which, however, are falling into decay.

WORK IN CARDBOARD.

THERE are few objects either of ornament or industry which cannot be modeled and imitated in cardboard or paper. It is a field open for the production of an endless variety of work, and this with scarcely any expense, and comparatively little trouble or difficulty. It is scarcely necessary to enumerate the beautiful work which has been executed almost entirely from cardboard; the elaborate models of cities, ships, and palaces so often met with in public exhibitions of almost every kind speak too eloquently for themselves to call for further mention.

We have no hesitation in saying that most boys of twelve or fourteen have already attempted to construct certain objects—toy stages, boats, or other articles of a like nature—from cardboard; but they have done so without that instruction and knowledge so essential for the exaction of successful work of every kind. Hence the repeated failures, and the crooked botch-work which speaks more of ignorance than inability or lack of skill, so frequently met with in spare corners of the playroom.

In this article we shall confine ourselves to the consideration of work which is not the less useful or attractive because it is simple and easily understood.

Before actually commencing our directions we would, however, admonish the reader to undertake the subjects as we give them, in due form, and not to commence at the ending of the article. He may read, understand, and yet fail in producing a satisfactory result, as perfection is not found in the theory, but the discriminate practice of the subject in hand. As in most work of this description, success is only to be achieved by the exercise of great care and accuracy in the cutting and fitting of the component parts of the article in hand.

THE USE OF THE TOOLS.

The three great requisites necessary for the production of good cardboard work are good material, good tools, and plenty of room. The last-named subject is not the least important of the three, as cramped space is a great drawback, and imparts an irksome character to that which would have otherwise been an agreeable and healthy occupation. If the young workman is not possessed of a roomy work-table he will do well to purchase a wide piece of well-planed board, as this will answer the double purpose of giving the necessary space and saving the table itself from injury. It should not be forgotten, however, that a soft wood is that best adapted for this purpose, as it is necessary, for the cleanliness of the cutting of the cardboard that the blade of the knife used should penetrate the wood a little. A plank of limewood, it has been found, answers the purpose admirably.

The importance of this subject, trivial as it may appear, cannot be too earnestly urged. For example, the fibrous nature of pinewood renders it almost impossible to cut a clean curve into a piece of card, and even a straight cut, unless drawn in the direction of the fibres, is apt to ruffle and jag the sides of the material. On the contrary, the soft and evenly distributed grain of the limewood renders the cutting a clean and agreeable task. It will be found, however, that after a certain time the surface of the board must be planed, and rendered level again. If, after a few repetitions of this process, the board becomes flexible and yielding, it will be time to cast it aside and use another one. However, a good, strong board is very lasting.



FIG. 1.

Another very essential article is a good knife. As it is intended for cutting cardboard into different shapes, it should be pointed at the top, and possess a double edge, as depicted in Figure 1. A smaller and ordinary one-edged penknife will be found useful for cutting paper. The knife should be kept in good condition, and as a great number of knives, pocket or otherwise, are prematurely spoilt by careless and ignorant handling, we presume that a few hints on sharpening and trimming the edge of the knife will not be unwelcome to even the otherwise disinterested reader.



FIG. 2.

A hone, which may be of the ordinary kind, must be used to sharpen the point and edge of the knife, which should never be allowed to grow very blunt. As the state of the blade, however, will not depend solely on the sharpening, but the manner of sharpening, care should be taken not to rub away the blade by indiscriminate friction. The point of the knife should not be drawn in a circular manner, as shown in Figure 1; nor should it be held in the fashion there depicted; on the contrary, the forefinger of the right hand should be firmly pressed midway up the blade, and then drawn gently upward, one edge of the point after the other, as illustrated in Figure 2. A very blunt knife, however, cannot be so easily restored by the use of the hone; it should, therefore, be sent to the grinder's, to be ground properly, after which it can be softened by a little sharpening, in the manner we have explained above.

[To be continued.]

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor - $5.00
For the next best - - - - - 2.50
For the third in merit and promptness - - 1.00

N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 678.

1. A, Ebb, Edie, Abigail, Biast, E-li, I. 2. A shadow. 3. Yard-arm. 4. Cyclone, Tornado—CometT, YeddO, CratelI, LeviathaN, OmegA, NaiaD, EchO. 5. Elbe, Loan, Barn, Anne. 6. Maple, Fir, Elm, Larch, Cedar, Cork, Ash, Pear: T, Raw, War. 7. Gold-smith. 9. Ibex. Mist, Pale—ImMeT. BoliviA, EsseNiasi, XanThiC. 10. Garter, Garret.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 678.

1.—L. Brady, 1346 S. Fifth Street, St. Louis, Mo.

2.—F. C. Melrose, Fisherville, N. H.

3. M. E. Banning, Newport, R. I.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—ENIGMA.

FULL of sin and wickedness;
Full of love and gentleness;
Very often am I eaten;
Very often am I beaten.
I am a dainty in your larder;
I am as stone, and harder;
I am a catch, a point; I'm still
When I'm held, again I'm shrill;
I am different in each nation.
Pray, dear reader, guess then what's my station.

2.

My first, you'll find, means to commit to the earth;
To the angler my second is of great worth;
If in writing a con. you omit any word,
My whole you should do—at least, so I've heard.

3.—CHARADE.

"Oh, fie!" cries papa, and "Dear me!" sighs mamma,
And Charlie, the rascal, is looking demure,
While Aunt Pattie raises her hands and her eyes,
And murmurs, "How thoughtless and whole, to be sure!"

Young Charlie, whose hands are behind him just now,
Shakes himself slowly, and looks at the floor.
"I don't first," he says, "for it wasn't my fault.
And I'm sure that it will not occur any more.

"I care next for my toys than for displeasing you;"
For Charlie has visions of being well whipped,
And, e'en as the buttercup glistens with dew,
His amber eyelashes with tear-drops are tipped.

"Well, well," says mamma; and "Really, you know,
Boys will be boys," cries papa, with a smile.
But Aunt Pattie gravely is shaking her head—
She says that he ought to be talked to a while.

4.—ENIGMA.

They are raven, golden, hoary,
Either may be surely yours,
And to shorten a short story,—
They are fixed to all our doors.

5.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Two heated winds, whose blasts are filled with sand,
One Egypt warms and one Arabia's land.

1. A trait in man which, when he is imparts,
Most bring us joy and ever win our hearts.
2. Hurled every day by those who wish but harm;
To tender hearts a dread and great alarm.
3. A happy time, come however soon it may,
'Twill great joy bring, and drive all sin away.
4. In Indies East on roads both wild and dreary,
A resting-place for travelers worn and weary.
5. When Winter comes, and clothes the earth in white,
I then appear to form a brilliant sight.
6. The oldest of my kind are deemed the best,
Yet newest are read with more than earnest zest.

6.—SQUARE WORDS.

Fruits; cognizant; slender; before and a preposition; a sack or hamper.

7.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A letter; a kind of coal; conduct; to set down and soon; a Turkish general; a drinking vessel; a French river; a boy's nickname; a letter.

8.—SQUARE WORDS.

If you can get this once, no doubt,
My puzzle you will soon find out.

He who could do this in deceit
Might fairly get the name of cheat.

This river keeps two continents apart;
You'll find it quickly if you search the chart.

They twist and wriggle, and they slide about;
How they are caught I never could make out.

9.—LOGOGRIPH.

Like Venus, I am ocean-born,
And many a lovely face adorn;
Behead me, and I take my stand
Among the nobles of the land;
Cut off my tail, I'm on your board
When it with wine and fruits is stored;
Cut off my tail again, and me
At dinner on your sideboard see;
Cut off both head and tail, behold!
A place upon your head I hold.

10.—CHARADE.

Of various things I am composed—
Lace, copper, silk, tin, velvet, gum;
Put me before a certain grain,
I then a certain whim become.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

SWEEPING conclusions—The train of a lady's dress.

WHY is the American eagle gazing on the setting sun like an heir entering on his possessions? Because he has got his beak-west.

A LITTLE boy, after gazing earnestly at a man who was bald but had heavy whiskers, remarked, "His head was put on upside down when he was born, wasn't it, papa?"

THE paper on which the Bank of England notes are printed is made of new linen or cotton, and a note will support a weight of thirty-six pounds before it is sized. If the note proper is of the right size, it will support a man and his entire family for years.

TUTOR—"What have you on the board there, Miss Flyrte? Surely, you don't mean that for a scalene triangle?" *Miss Flyrte*—"Dear me, no! I don't know anything about horrid old scaly triangles! You know I never remember the hateful old things." *Tutor* (severely)—"Well, what have you been good enough to substitute, pray?" *Miss Flyrte*—"Oh, that! That's my idea of an all too simply perfect hat. I thought I might as well do something, you know. Isn't it a duck?" *Tutor* (blushing) "Really—ah—Miss Flyrte—I shall have to ask you to stop, after the hour." *Miss Flyrte*—"Why, of course I know you won't be cross! And mayn't I wait till one o'clock, so we can have a real, nice, long talk? Say yes, like a dear!" *Tutor* (utterly routed)—"Well—ah—really—why——" Curtain.

REAL ESTATE IN THE WEST.

THE Denver Land Company offer, in another column, alternate lots in their addition. These alternate lots are, in fact, given away, though a nominal charge of one dollar is made for the deed. The company limit the number purchasable at this price to five lots. Many of the large cities of the West have been started in a similar manner, and those who secured lots then find themselves now in possession of valuable property. The opportunity does not often present itself of making an investment in real estate at such prices. The reliability of the company and their title to the property being well established, there could be no risk, with a fine prospect for a rapid increase in value. Denver has had such a wonderfully rapid growth, it is probable that the land offered will be speedily taken up.

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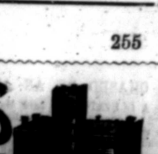
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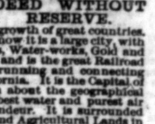
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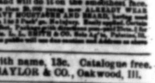
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53, 55 & 57 Park Place, New York.

CHASED BY AN ALLIGATOR.

"ALLIGATORS!" said Major Springle; "of course, there are alligators in India. Half the rivers up-country swarm with them and they abound in the tanks, as the large shallow ponds so numerous on the plains are called. In Karrachee, close to the entrance to the Persian Gulf, they have a tank stocked with what they call tame ones; and visitors can (and do) buy goats for a rupee each and throw them into the reptiles. And their reaching at a goat and tearing it to pieces is a spectacle to make a man forswear fresh-water bathing in India.

"I was once swimming in the Narbuddha River, near the Marble Rocks, one of the famous sights of the Central Provinces, which I had visited in company of two friends and a native driver. I had swam across the river alone, and had started to return, when I found that I had overestimated my powers of endurance under that torrid Indian sun. I felt a sort of vertigo which I feared was the warning of a sunstroke.

"Suddenly I saw, coming around the point of a little island, what looked like the end of a thick broomstick, floating perpendicularly down the stream.

"I didn't wait to examine it, for I knew at the first glance that it was the horn that rises from an alligator's nose. I altered my course at once, swimming diagonally down the stream. I passed the island, and got over nearly a third of the distance to the shore before I ventured to look around. Up to that moment the alligator had not seen me, but before I could resume my race for the land, part of the great head surged heavily over the water, and then, horribly and unmistakably, the horn began to move toward me!

"I began to swim for my life, with the odds altogether against me. In half a minute I looked over my shoulder and saw that the brute was covering three feet to my one. He was about sixty yards behind me, and the shore was probably eighty yards away. It was evident that I had no chance; but I swam desperately. In a quarter of a minute I looked around again. The alligator was very close to me then. I saw his eyes glistening, for he had raised his head partly out of the water, and I heard the slight swash of the river as he forged through it. But another sound was in my ears, too—a sound like the ringing of bells and the beating of a blacksmith's hammer on the anvil. The blazing sun and the terrible exertion were doing their part, and I knew that in a few minutes I should be unable to swim another foot.

"Then came an inspiration, the recollection of the triumphs I had achieved in diving in days gone by. I was down in a second. Of course I remained under as long as I could. When I came up I was, perhaps, fifty yards from the shore, and a hasty backward glance showed me that the alligator had stopped on losing sight of me, for I had gained considerably in the race. He saw me the moment I came to the surface, and was on my track again. I swam a few yards, but he was so close to me that, though terribly tired, I went under again. I was unable to stay under this time more than twenty seconds, but that took me fifteen yards nearer the shore. When I came up he did not see me so quickly as he had done before, and I swam a little distance before I saw him once more in pursuit.

"I was now scarcely able to swim, and neither had I strength to go under. The reptile was so close to me that I expected every second to feel his teeth, and in utter despair I stopped swimming and let down my feet. They touched the bottom, for the bank shoaled, and the water was not higher than my waist. With a last effort I plunged forward, and at the same moment the alligator, feeling himself getting into shallow water, surged around and swam away.

"I think that I should then have concluded the adventure by being drowned in a foot and a half of water, for I had not sufficient strength to stand on my feet; but my friend and the driver rushed into the river and caught me in their arms as I fell."

A WEEK WITHOUT FOOD.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Somerset (Md.) *Herald*, writing from Whitestone, Va., gives the following terrible experience of a family which was found adrift in a sailboat on the Chesapeake Bay:

Early on Sunday morning a small sailing boat was seen drifting up to Chase's Landing, a few miles distant from this place. It was brought in and moored, and an examination made at once. Six persons, who appeared lifeless as a stone, were found in the boat. The discoverers of the mysterious boat were regarded at the time as the brave act of a brave man in straitened circumstances, and the family upon their arrival were kindly welcomed to the village of Whitestone. A house was provided for them, and the neighbors gave them fish, vegetables, and everything they needed, but Davis proved to be a lazy, good-for-nothing and unworthy man. He could not be coaxed to work, although he was able-bodied and in perfect health. He traded off the provisions, groceries and produce for whisky, and was in a state of beastly intoxication almost all the time he lived here. People then shut down on him and would give his family nothing to eat, hoping that this method would awaken him to his senses and force him to work. He preferred to starve, and being without food for several days, he and his family started for parts unknown in the little sailing boat. They took nothing to eat or drink on the voyage, and no beds or bedding to lie upon at night. Why he should go in this way is a mystery, and looks like self-destruction or an attempt to murder his family by slow degrees. The boat was not seen from Monday till Saturday, and being these six days without food, besides being starved before starting out, rendered their condition miserable beyond conception.

OAK ORNAMENTS.

A GENTLEMAN connected with the manufacture of ornaments from Irish bog oak gives some interesting particulars with regard to the history of that industry. When taken up, this bog oak is perfectly black from the action of the peat or bog-water. It is very rarely obtained in a sound state, and in most cases the outer portions of the tree or log are rotten, and useless even for fuel. When laid up for use, care must be taken that it is not placed in the open air, lest it may, from the sun's rays, become open and shattered into chips from end to end. To preserve it, it must be put into some cool place and left to dry gradually, and when properly seasoned it must be cut in lengths of from two to four feet, and these lengths be split again, and the sound parts removed from the unsound.

It takes from four to six years to season some specimens, as in many instances the wood is found at a depth of sight, and sometimes ten, feet under the surface. When properly seasoned, any portion requiring to be glued becomes as hard as stone, and is firmer and less liable to give way than any portion of the manufactured article. The finish is not quite perfect until the article has been for some time in use, and the longer the finer the article seems to be, no matter whether used as personal or table ornaments. The men employed are all, without exception, self-taught. Each one makes his own tools, and will but take any apprentices, and each person has a peculiar taste for a certain class of ornaments which he follows, and to which he is left, to produce the best specimens he can. There are jewelers who mount and embellish the ornaments with gold and silver, and with rare and most brilliant Irish gems, such as the Kerry Irish diamond, the emerald, the garnet, amethyst, beryl, aquamarine and Donegal pebble.

The Celtic ornaments are generally studded with the above native gems; they are beautiful and most artistically executed. The designs embrace some thousands, and all of them are both classic and historically illustrative of Irish antiquities. Extensive deposits of bog oak and other buried woods have been discovered in Germany.

SOME CURIOUS STATISTICS.

ALLOWING two square feet to each person, the entire population of Boston could stand on the Public Garden, with a good deal of room to spare. The entire population of the United States could stand in Boston proper (not including Brighton, Dorchester and West Roxbury). The entire population of the world (now estimated at 1,460,000,000) could stand on the island of Martha's Vineyard, or in the space occupied by the town of Boston, Brookline, Newton, Needham, Dedham, Hyde Park and Milton. The State of Massachusetts could in this way accommodate seventy times the present population of the world. The entire population of the world, placed side by side, and allowing two feet to each person, would encircle the earth twenty times. The States of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, taken together, are as large as England. Any one of the States of Georgia, Illinois, Iowa and North Carolina is as large as England. Kansas is as large as England and Scotland together. Ireland is about the size of Maine. France is more than twice as large as England, Wales and Scotland together. Texas is thirty-five times as large as Massachusetts, or as large as Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Ohio and Indiana combined. The entire population of the United States could be provided for in the State of Texas, allowing each man, woman and child four acres of land. The entire population of the world could be provided for in the United States, allowing each person one and a half acres of land.



CHASED BY AN ALLIGATOR.—TERRIBLE ADVENTURE OF MAJOR SPRINGLE IN THE NARBUDDHA RIVER, INDIA.

LADIES having vicious husbands will do well to read this: A lady found herself wedded to a gambler so confirmed that, work as hard as he might, he would always lose all his pay at faro. For a time she endeavored to persuade him against this unhappy sport, but in vain; so, without more ado she started a gambling-table on her own account, and invited her spouse to play at that. He agreed, on the condition that now and then the dullness of play should be enlivened by occasional drinks at her expense; and then, full of hope, he sat down. Here his usual bad luck followed him. The month's wages flew into possession of the thrifty wife, who, laying by the sum, was ready with the table again when four more weeks' toil had furnished her better-half with the means of playing. In this way the time flew by, she always winning, until at length the gambler's wife was a wealthy woman, keeps her own carriage, and has made a tour of the world in company with her now reformed husband with their happy children.